150,000 kilos of FMD-infected pork sent back

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2001 ★ 86 PAGES 8 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 99 ₱15

Eating is bigger traffic hazard

NABANGGA SIYA HABANG KUMAKAIN!

MIAMI—While many local governments are cracking down on cell phone users who chat behind the wheel, preliminary data from a US study of

EATING/ A19

WITH THIS ISSUE

All about *élan*

- A Whale Of Fun
- Proms And Graduates
- Role Models
- Composting And Recycling

Gov't to seek help of Swiss parliament

Jacobi tells Gloria: Give me 4 weeks

By Blanche S. Rivera
and Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government is keen on elevating its investigation into the Marcoses' alleged hidden wealth to the level of the Swiss legislature, now that German investigators reportedly have evidence of a money-laundering attempt by Irene and Gregorio "Greggy" Araneta, the agency said yesterday.

PCGG officer in charge Jorge Sarmiento said the agency was studying the viability of seeking the help of the Swiss parliament in trying to pin down the elusive bank assets of the heirs of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Sarmiento said PCGG officials were considering making representations with the Swiss legislature soon, if the plan gets the green light from Malacañang and other commission officials.

He suggested that the Swiss Federal Council "could perhaps create something like our Senate blue ribbon committee to look into the Marcos ill-gotten wealth."

Former PCGG Chair Jovito Salonga, in a separate interview, agreed that the government should make representations with both the Swiss Federal Council and the Swiss Supreme Court to immediately freeze any Marcos accounts in that country.

Salonga also recommended that the agency "reactivate the contacts we had in 1986," particularly in the case of one of the agency's former lawyers, Moritz Leuenberger, who has gone on to become the Swiss president.

The PCGG is still awaiting news from Philippine Embassy officials in Switzerland and Ger-

GOV'T/ A4

Benipayo clueless as staffers find key to voter listing

By Cathy Yamsuan

THE COMMISSION on Elections has drafted an amendatory measure that would enable it to register four million new voters before May 14 if approved by Congress.

Trouble is, Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo was apparently clueless about it.

Benipayo admitted learning about it only yesterday afternoon while delivering his oral argument against the holding of a special registration for new voters before members of the Supreme Court.

With Benipayo was a subordinate, Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, who pulled the surprise by revealing to the Supreme Court justices about the draft measure that his staff had formulated.

Borra said his proposal was a "combination" of the provisions of the Omnibus Election Code and the Voters' Registration Act of 1996 (Republic Act 8189). The Code allows the Comelec to conduct a special registration while RA 8189 details safeguards against traditional electoral problems like vote-padding and flying voters.

BENIPAYO/ A19

Erap to appeal Monday; 10th plunder charge filed

By Michael Lim Ubac

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada will ask the Supreme Court on Monday to reconsider its decision affirming the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo, his lawyer Rene Saguisag yesterday said.

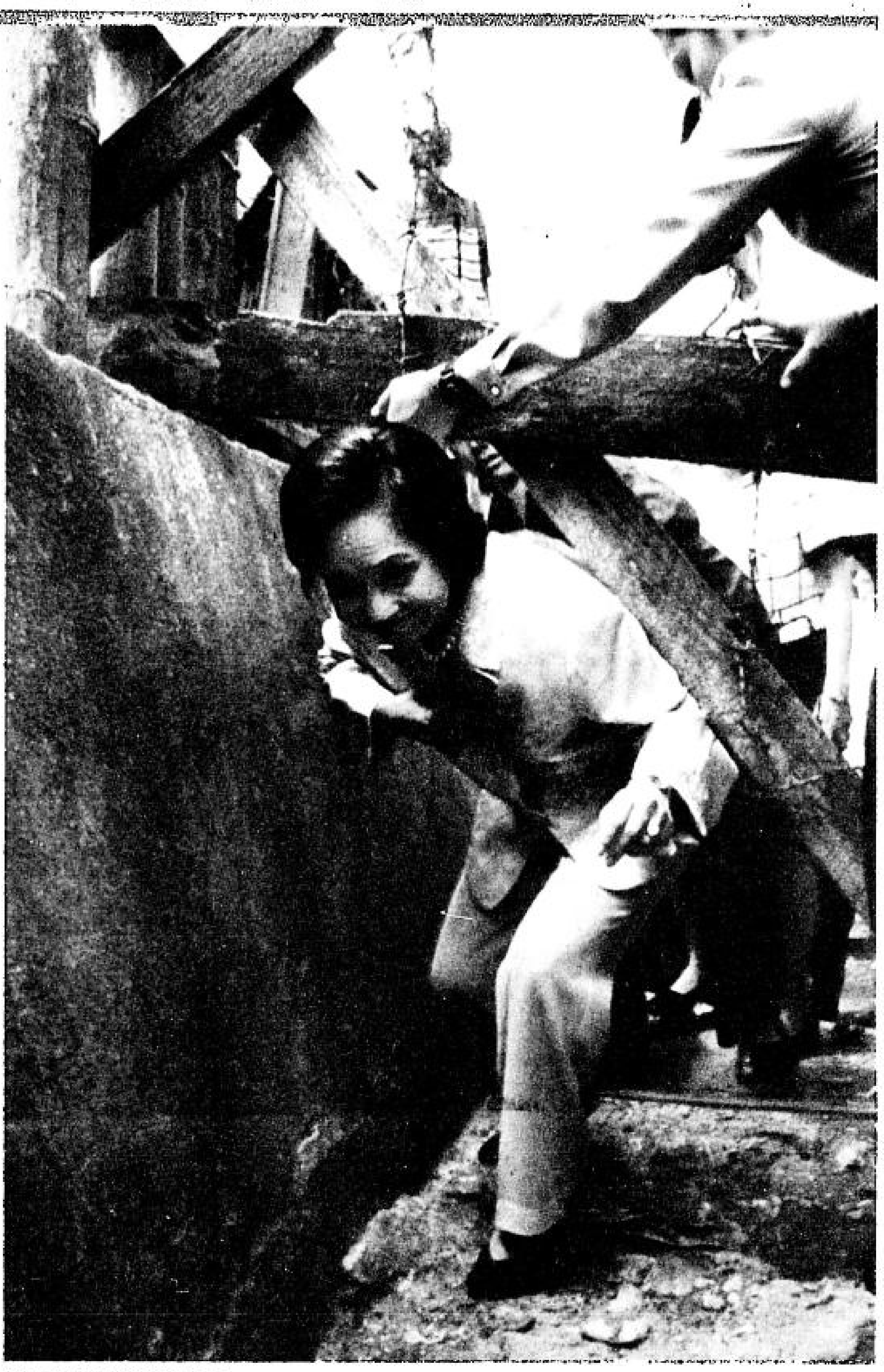
While Estrada's lawyers were preparing for the appeal, three lawyers' and anti-crime groups yesterday filed with the Office of the Ombudsman the 10th complaint for plunder against Estrada. Economic plunder, the systematic theft from the state of more than P50 million, is punishable by death.

The complainants alleged that Estrada was the real owner of the P3.3-billion account of "Jose Velarde" with Equitable PCI Bank.

The complaint also accused businessman Jaime Dichaves, who claimed he owned the Velarde account, and 10 others, of helping Estrada amass ill-gotten wealth.

The others were "plastics king" William Gatchalian, Jaime Dichaves, Abby Dichaves, Mark Jimenez, Manny Pangilinan, George Go, Dante Tan, Lucio Co, Kevin/Kelvin Garcia, lawyer Fernando Chua. An-

ERAP/ A18



HOLE IN THE WALL JOAN BONDOC

President Macapagal drops in for a surprise visit on a squatter colony known as Rio Vista near the Palace but is herself surprised that entry is only through a 1-by-2 meter gap in the fence. *(Story on Page A3.)*

Top PMA grad to get 10 awards

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—"I am proud of being a farmer's son. This is a testimony that poverty is not a barrier toward success. Most success stories are rags-to-riches," said 22-year-old Cadet First Class Sadiri Tabutol of Ballesteros, Cagayan, the class valedictorian of the Philippine Military Academy's Kaakibat Class of 2001.

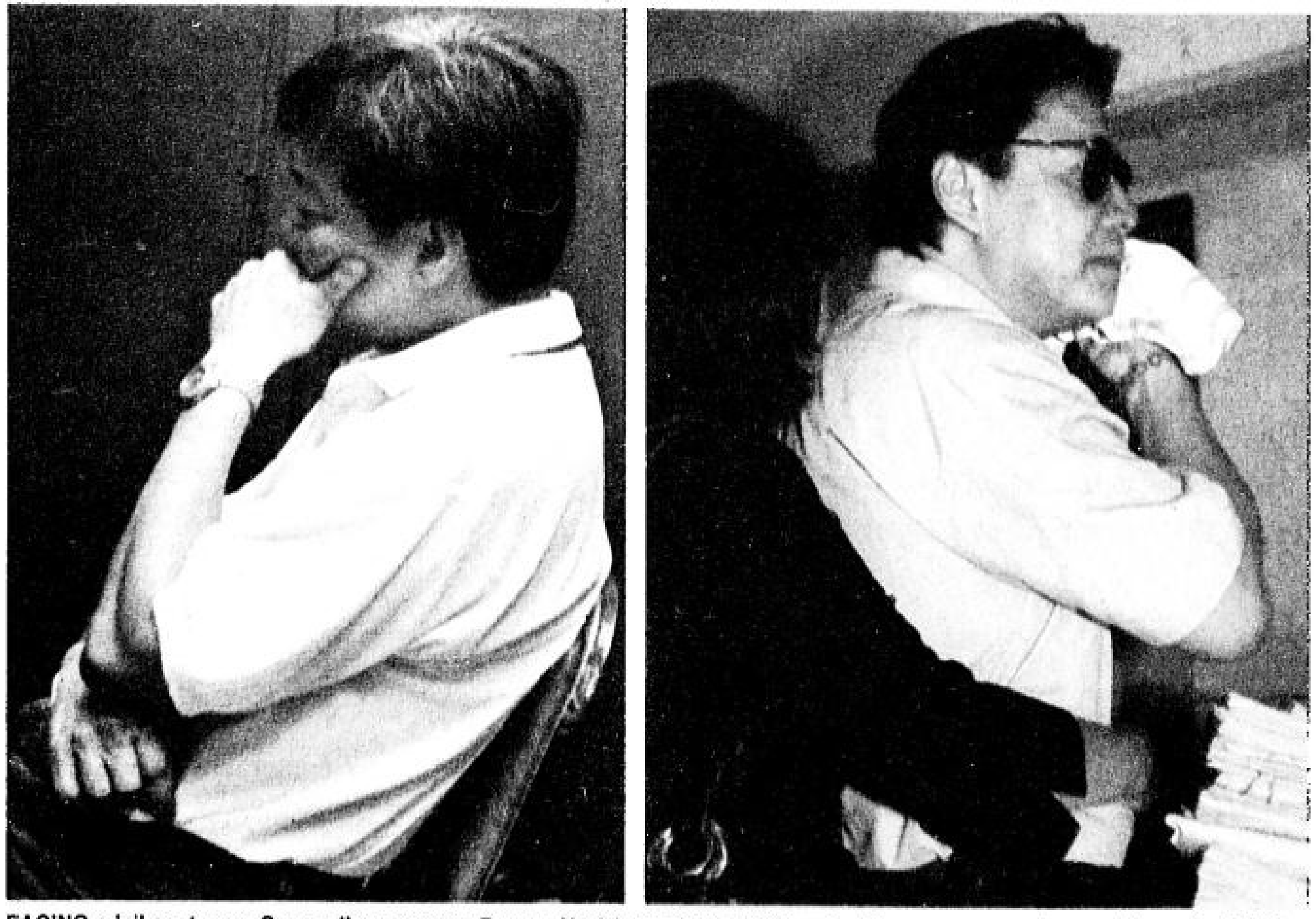
Sons of farmers from Cagayan and Camarines Norte lead the PMA graduates here on March 25.

Tabutol will receive 10 awards, the most number a cadet has received since 1987.

Aside from garnering the Presidential Saber for being the top graduate, Tabutol will also receive the Zobel Scholarship award, as well as plaques for topping Weapons System, Engineering Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Sciences,

TOP/ A18

Ozone disco owners guilty, get 4 years



FACING a jail sentence, Ozone disco owners Ramon Ng (above, left) and Hermilo Ocampo, appear tense at the sala of Judge Ophelia Marquez of the Metropolitan Trial Court in Quezon City. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Volt Contreras

FIVE years after the worst fire in the country gutted the Ozone disco in Quezon City and killed or injured more than 250, a court handed a maximum four-year jail term to two owners of the dance club and fined them and four other board members more than P20 million.

Two days short of the inferno's fifth anniversary, Judge Ophelia Marquez slaked the victims' long thirst for justice by finding Hermilo Ocampo, president of the company that operated the Ozone disco, and company treasurer Ramon Ng, guilty of "reckless imprudence" leading to 160 deaths and 95 injuries.

"The place was a firetrap" the court noted, because it lacked exit routes, fire extinguishers, and warning devices, leading to the "frightening death toll."

Four other officials of Westwood Enterprises Inc. were cleared of liability for the four-hour blaze that had killed so many and left others scarred for life. Most of the victims were high school and college students celebrating the end of the school year when the fire erupted on March 18, 1996.

No building inspectors from the Quezon City government were charged in the case, said court clerk Neneth Edad.

Ocampo and Ng, along with the four other board members, were ordered to pay P150,000 in death indemnity and damages to the families of each of those killed, and P100,000 to those injured.

The other four shareholders are Ocampo's

OZONE/ A18

'Can't we just burn them, too?'

By Volt Contreras

"CAN'T we just burn them all alive, too? Let's just give them back the money. They'll do as payment for damages, and I'll light the first flame," cried Melba Galang of Pandacan, Manila.

The physical and emotional scars die hard. And they showed yesterday after the victims and survivors of the March 18, 1996 tragedy heard the verdict.

Some went into hysterics on learning that Judge Ophelia Marquez only jailed two of the six accused Ozone company executives, namely Hermilo Ocampo and Ramon Ng.

The accused were ordered to pay only P150,000 per victim, in civil damages excluding actual damages.

Galang's three sons, then teenagers, were at Ozone that night. One was killed in the fire. The surviving two, who were with her yesterday at the courtroom, went through extensive surgeries, according to their mother. She also cited their lost incomes, not to mention the anguish they have suffered all this time. That should entitle them to at least P5 million in damages, said Galang in tears.

The face of one of Galang's surviving sons, Rene, is now almost completely disfigured. He has also developed a phobia toward fire truck sirens and the smell of burning objects. The sound of sirens or the merest waft of smoke cause him panic.

CAN'T/ A18

DAPAT TALAGA IPAGBAWAL 'YAN!

FMD CONTAMINATION

150,00 kilos of infected pork sent back

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA

SIX container vans of diseased pork are on a ship steaming toward the Philippines, but the Department of Agriculture has made sure they will not be landed on our shores.

Yesterday the DA ordered that the entry into the country of the container vans be blocked after their importers admitted that the frozen uncooked meat was contaminated with foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

Ronnel Avila, chief of the DA's Veterinary Quarantine Service (VQS), said the shipment consisted of 150,000 kilos of pork products from Europe, where an outbreak of the animal disease has spread from England to France and threatens the rest of the continent.

According to Avila, the contaminated shipment is on its way to the Philippines and is expected to arrive at the end of the month.

The shipment will be returned to Germany, France and Denmark, their countries of origin. The importers have been asked to immediately return it.

"The department has ordered the return of the frozen pork to its suppliers even if the products have not arrived in the country," Avila said.

On March 14, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor issued Administrative Order No. 5 banning the importation of FMD-susceptible animals, their meat and meat products and byproducts from Europe.

The order covers all importations from Europe made after Feb. 19 but health authorities want earlier importation orders from Europe also covered by the ban.

The six container vans steaming toward the Philippines were imported after Feb. 19.

FMD is a viral disease and has no known cure. It affects cloven-footed animals like pigs, carabaos, cattle, sheep and goats.

When infected, livestock are afflicted with fever and show lesions in the mouth, tongue and skin near the hooves. As a result, they cannot eat, become weak and susceptible to other diseases from which they eventually die. FMD is not transmissible to humans.

Montemayor said the latest order was meant to protect the Philippine livestock industry by preventing the entry of FMD into the country.

The Bureau of Customs said it had confiscated 20 shipments of boxed cattle, sheep and goats that would be re-shipped to their countries of origin. No other details on these shipments were available or if the animals were contaminated with FMD.

In the meantime, Avila asked meat importers to look for alternative sources in order to meet their orders.

He advised them to import meat from FMD-free countries like the United States and Canada to compensate for the 20,000 metric tons of pork products that are imported from Europe annually.

Avila also said processors could buy meat products from Mindanao which is FMD-free.

Montemayor assured the public that local livestock and their meat are FMD-free and safe.

He directed the Bureau of Animal Industry to suspend the processing, evaluation and issuance of Veterinary Quarantine Clearances and International Veterinary Certificate applications for the importation of FMD-infected and—susceptible animals and meat from Europe.

He also ordered quarantine officers at all major ports to confiscate shipments of suspect meat from Europe.

In its report on March 12, the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), or the World Organization for Animal Health, confirmed the outbreak of FMD in France.

The organization quoted a report by Dr. Isabelle Chmitelin, deputy director general of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of France, which said FMD was detected among dairy and young bulls in a farm near Mayenne, France.

She said the infection originated in a farm located 500 meters from an infected farm that imported sheep from the United Kingdom.

Since the FMD and mad cow disease scares erupted two weeks ago, consumer groups expressed concern that the prices of meat products would sharply increase.

According to the Consumer Price Watch, the limited supply of livestock and their byproducts from Australia and New Zealand may push up local prices.

To try to prevent meat prices from rising, the agriculture department reduced import tariffs on Australian cattle imports to 3 percent from the 4 percent imposed by the Estrada administration to boost the domestic beef industry.

The country's cattle breeders hope to recover their sales, which plunged by as much as 60 percent because of the mad cow scare.

According to Cattle Feedlot Association of the Philippines president Martin B. Gomez, sales of live cattle to wet markets dropped significantly in the last few months when consumers shifted to chicken and fish. *With Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

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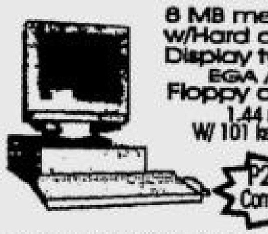

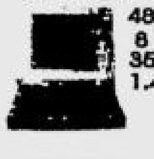

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Palace mulling over water rate hike

Increase to be done not via automatic rate adjustment

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM
AND CLARISSA S. BATINO

MALACAÑANG may allow the Maynilad Water Services to increase its water rates from P6.58 to P17 per cubic meter to recover losses, but this should not be done through an automatic currency exchange rate adjustment (Cera), according to Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong.

President Macapagal-Arroyo would rather have the increase done through the extraordinary price adjustment (EPA) system, said Datumanong, who also chairs the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) board.

The EPA is a cost recovery mechanism provided for in the 1997 concession agreement between Maynilad and the MWSS.

Maynilad, the Lopez Group-led company that operates the West Zone water concession, has asked for a modification of its concession agreement to allow it to apply an automatic Cera to recover P2.3' billion in losses from currency fluctuations.

It announced last week that it would suspend payments of its concession fees to the MWSS.

Renegotiation

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said talks for a possible renegotiation of the agreement with Maynilad started yesterday. He stressed, however; that this would not include modifying the contract to accommodate an automatic Cera.

According to Datumanong, the President is taking the interest of the consumers into consideration and does not want an amendment of the concession agreement. Consumers believe that there will be a steep increase in the cost of water if the Maynilad auto-Cera proposal is approved.

Datumanong explained that the MWSS was not really against an increase in water rates if only to help Maynilad recover its huge losses.

He said the MWSS board had already approved the increase in principle, but that this should be done through the EPA.

He explained that under the EPA, the increased rate—say P17 per cubic meter, as proposed by Maynilad—will take effect only for a year "until the peso becomes stronger."

But with the Cera, such an increase would be permanently in operation during the 25-year water concession deal.

"If we allow that, the consumers will go after us," he said.

According to Datumanong, the rate increase is no longer an issue. What is causing the impasse is the debate on whether to do this through the Cera or the EPA.

"The issue is the increase of tariff, which Maynilad wants done through an amendment of the concession agreement, but which we want to effect through an ordinary action of the (MWSS) board, using the EPA, without amending the agreement," he said.

Willing to help

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said the government was willing to help Maynilad talk with its foreign creditors to restructure $720 million in loans that it had absorbed from the MWSS in 1997.

But he said the government was not agreeable to Maynilad's petition for an auto-Cera.

Both Datumanong and Canlas said the auto-Cera proposal, if approved, would give the government more "legal" problems.

"The bad thing about the Cera is that the amendment of the concession agreement can provoke legal actions from some quarters, like those who lost in the (1997) bidding," Datumanong said.

Some groups are already suggesting a possible re-bidding of the West Zone concession if Maynilad makes good its threat to return the concession, leaving the government with the burden of paying for the sovereign-backed loans.

Rafael Alunan III, Maynilad president, earlier claimed that foreign currency fluctuations had left the company with a cash flow deficit of P6.3 billion.

Alunan said this might force the firm to retrench its workers or return the concession to the MWSS.

"We assume that when they bid for the MWSS they knew what they were doing," said Romulo.

"Let us not pre-empt the talks because if there is goodwill on both sides, they could come up with an agreement," he said.

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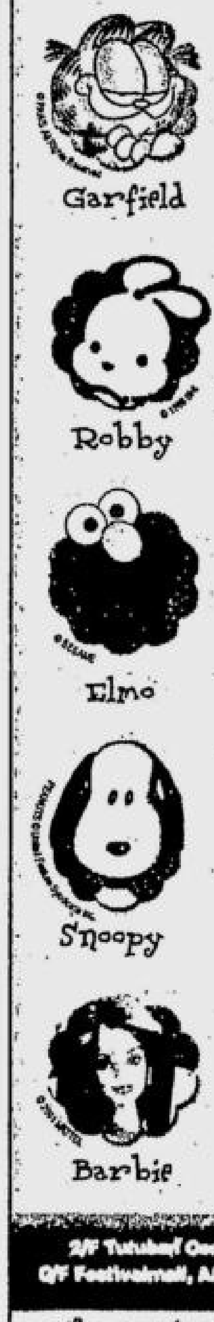

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Gov't workers say 5-percent pay hike not enough

By Gerald Lacuarta

A GOOD sign, but not good enough.

This was the response of the Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) to Malacañang's offer to grant a 5-percent salary increase to government workers in June and its assurance that no one would be retrenched this year.

Courage president Ferdinand Gaite said Malacañang's turnaround from its earlier position was "a good sign of President Macapagal-Arroyo's response to our vigilance."

Gaite said that the announcement of a 5-percent salary adjustment provided "brief relief," but that it "still fell short" of Courage's longstanding demand for a P3,000 across-the-board pay hike.

"A 5-percent salary increase is not enough," he said. "It is too meager. It translates to only P10 to P12 a day for the low-salaried employees."

Gaite said the rising cost of basic commodities and services, tax payments and other deductions would wipe out the impact of the increase on government workers' purchasing power.

He pointed out that the government could very well grant the demand for a P3,000 salary increase for some 1.2 million government workers considering that it was spending P11.5 billion for the modernization of the Armed Forces.

Gaite also expressed doubt about the President's sincerity in assuring government workers that no one among them would be retrenched this year.

The President had said this would not be in keeping with her policy on privatization.

Gaite said some 10,000 workers of the National Power Corp. stood to lose their jobs once the Omnibus Power Bill, which calls for the privatization of Napocor, was passed.

He noted that the President was also set to sign into law the Lateral Attrition Bill, which imposes collection targets on employees of revenue-generating agencies like the Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Those who do not meet the targets will be given their walking papers, he said.

Gloria makes surprise visit to squatter area near Palace

By Armand N. Nocum

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo paid an unannounced visit to a squatter colony in Manila yesterday, her third in recent weeks, raising speculation that she was working on her "Gloria magic."

Unlike in her visit to a settlement in Tondo last week, however, the President was not booed by the 100 or so persons who were surprised to see her at the squatter site beside the San Miguel Church near Malacañang.

"She may not have Erap's charisma, but she seems to be more sincere in reaching out to us," said resident Betty Flores, 53, as she excitedly told how it felt to shake hands and talk with the President of the Philippines.

Flores said that in the 30 years they had been living behind the Presidential Action Center (PACE) building, this was the first time that an occupant of Malacañang visited them.

Ironically, deposed President Joseph Estrada, who prided himself on being pro-poor and traveled far to be with them, never visited the small squatter area known as "Rio Vista."

The tenement houses, made mostly of cardboard and wood, are crammed into the few meters of space between the PACE building and the Pasig River.

Earlier in the day, Ms Macapagal received people who trooped to the PACE office for help.

The noon visit to the squatter colony gave the Presidential Security Group (PSG) the jitters because Ms Macapagal could only enter the place with a handful of guards.

This was because access to Rio Vista was through a one-by-two-meter gap in barbed wire.

Most of the taller PSG men had to remain outside from where they noticed that many of the children had red eyes, indicating "sore eyes."

Some of those who entered with the President covered their noses from the smell of urine, human waste and the pungent Pasig River.

But the President, who was dressed in a floral lilac blouse and pants, seemed oblivious of all this as she talked with the families for about half an hour.

She inquired about their condition and promised to relocate them.

Not everyone was pleased by the President's visit, however.

"An old cheap campaign trick," the militant party list group Sanlakas yesterday said of Ms Macapagal's visit to Rio Vista.

In a press statement, Sanlakas national president and party list nominee Wilson Fortaleza said, "It is obvious the visit was only a gimmick to project a pro-poor image for Macapagal. We have seen this before as part of Estrada's bag of tricks to cast his black magic on the country's marginalized sectors."

"This gimmickry shows the hollowness of Macapagal's promise of new politics. She is doing an Erap by resorting to Estrada trademarks in a desperate attempt to ensure a 13-0 victory by the administration in the senatorial race," Fortaleza added.

After the visit, the President told that reporters the government was rushing to build more housing units for squatters.

She said that since Jan. 20 when she took over the presidency from Estrada, her administration had distributed 60,000 housing units and had 30,000 more available.

How to prioritize who will receive those 30,000 units is another matter, she said. *With an AFP report*

NBI finds new leads on 'Erap mansions'

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation, under a new leadership, has reversed itself on a number of controversial residences and lots accumulated under allegedly questionable circumstances by ousted President Joseph Estrada.

After the Estrada-era NBI cleared the deposed leader—finding only that the so-called "Erap mansions" were owned by several corporations—the new NBI has stumbled on some "good leads" directly tracing the ownership of the mansions to Estrada.

At a news conference yesterday, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the bureau was in the process of ascertaining if "Jose Velarde" was an alias used by Estrada.

This was because the identity of the real Velarde was instrumental in establishing the case, as the NBI has determined that Velarde owned the houses and lots, particularly the "Boracay mansion" in New Manila, Quezon City.

According to Wycoco, the NBI Special Investigation Service, led by deputy director Carlos Caabay, was able to establish that the mansion, infamous for its simulated Boracay white-sand beach, had been bought using checks drawn from the P3.3-billion Velarde account with the Equitable-PCI Bank.

Caabay told reporters that since the case involved more than six controversial properties, he decided to focus the investigation on the ownership of the Boracay mansion.

The property in question is a 7,145.92-square meter compound that contains a mansion and a "wave" pool at No. 100, 11th Street in New Manila. Its registered owner is St. Peter Holdings Corp., which bought the property on Oct. 1, 1999.

The other pieces of real estate include a 4,815-sq.-m. property on 796-800 Harvard, Mandaluyong, registered under KB Space Holdings and three other Wack Wack lots—on Wack Wack Street, Harvard Street and Stanford Street.

"We have established that the (Boracay) mansion was registered under St. Peter's Holdings Corp. This company is owned by businessman Jose Yulo. But Yulo has claimed that the real owner is (Estrada friend) Jaime Dichaves," said Caabay.

During the aborted impeachment trial of Estrada, Dichaves claimed ownership of the mansion. Dichaves had also claimed that he owned the Velarde account.

"The three checks issued to buy the mansion was drawn from the Velarde account," said Caabay. But he said prosecution witness Clarissa Ocampo had testified that Estrada had opened the account under the alias Jose Velarde.

Thus, he said, the agency needed the impeachment documents to establish that Estrada and Velarde were one and the same person.

Wycoco said he had already requested Ombudsman Aniano Desierto to furnish the agency with pertinent documents regarding Estrada's alleged properties and the Velarde bank records.

The NBI is still waiting for the Ombudsman's action on the request, Caabay said.

It was Caabay who announced in December that the NBI had found no evidence to even suggest that the mansions belonged to Estrada. At that time he was the acting NBI director.

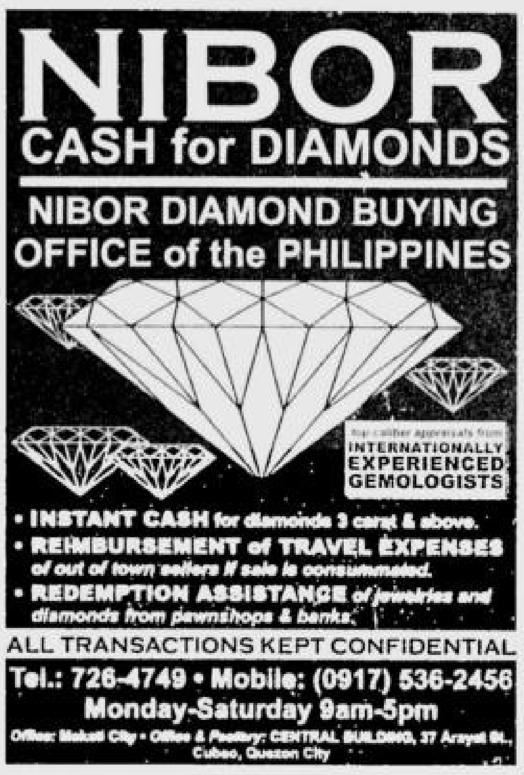
After Estrada's ouster, Caabay admitted that "some personalities" in the Estrada administration were hindering the NBI's investigation. He said the agency was forced to stop before it could dig deeper into the case.

When Wycoco became head of the NBI, he vowed to trace the ownership of the mansions as well as solve two other cases that had aroused intense public interest—the abduction of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, and the Rizal Day bombings.

Volunteers wanted

THE UNANG Hakbang Foundation needs some 220 volunteers to participate in its summer workshop project, "Talon, Takbo, Likha," a six-week program of activities for street children and children from urban poor communities ages 6 to 16 set on April 16-May 26.

Registration of volunteers will be held starting March 19. Interested parties may register at UHF's Bahay ni San Francisco, St. Francis de Assissi Parish Church, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City. Write or call the foundation at 307 Platinum 2000, 7 Annapolis, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila, telephone 723-0616, telefax 723-4367. Or call Troy Baydo at 0917-399-8408 or Matet Santos at 0919-554-3630.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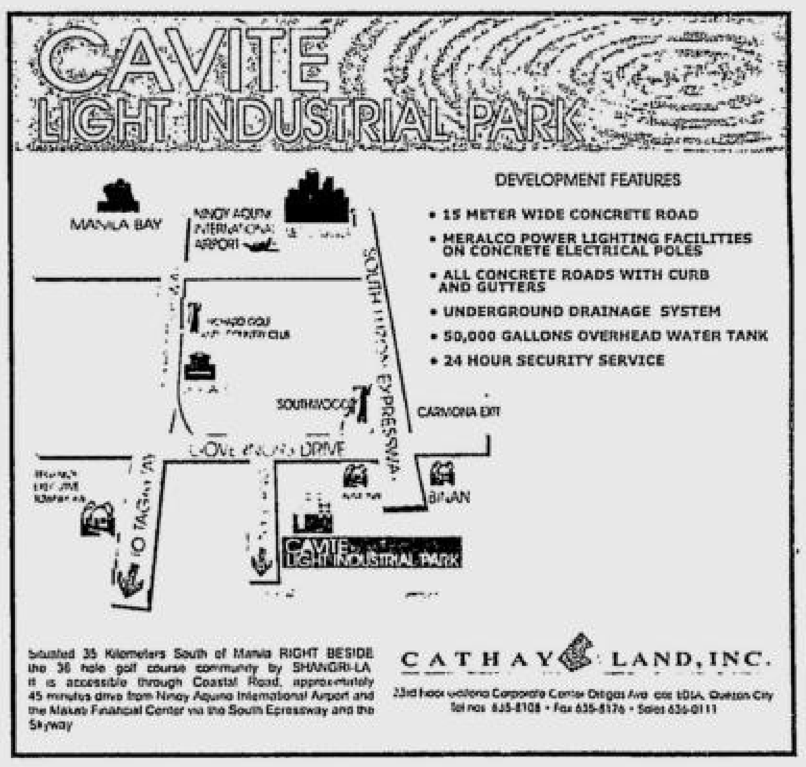
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Don't let venue stall talks–Joker

BY JOWEL F. CANUDAY
PDI Mindanao Bureau
AND CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

THE VENUE of the peace talks between the government and communist rebels should not delay the peace negotiations between the two sides.

For two administration senatorial candidates, the venue in fact could be anywhere from the middle of the Pacific Ocean to one of the country's isolated islands or even resorts in Palawan or in Anilao, Batangas.

"(The venue) does not matter really as long as peace is achieved . . . the venue should be secondary," Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo told the INQUIRER at the Rizal Park in Davao City.

Arroyo and other candidates of the People Power Coalition (PPC) were in a campaign sortie in Davao that coincided with yesterday's "Araw ng Dabaw" celebration.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said government must "soften up" its position on "peripheral issues related to the conduct of the peace process."

"I can't accept the position that the question of venue that can't be agreed upon would be the obstacle to the resumption of the peace process," Biazon said.

No venue has been set for the planned peace talks between government and the National Democratic Front. The government prefers that the talks be held here while the NDF wants it abroad because the military allegedly used the failed 1986 peace talks to spy on the rebel group's negotiators and allies.

Arroyo and reelectionist Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. favor the holding of the talks in the country, although Arroyo said it should not matter if the negotiations are held abroad because what is more important is for both panels to meet and talk.

Middle of ocean

"They can even hold (the talks) in the middle of the Pacific Ocean if they want, you know," Arroyo said.

He believed both sides could work out their differences on venue.

Magsaysay said the NDF should not fear about security and spying because there are secure venues in the country.

He said the talks could be held in an island or in resorts in Palawan or even Anilao, Batangas.

"There are so many places in the Philippines that can be isolated," he said.

Magsaysay said the NDF proposal to hold the talks either in the Netherlands or in Brussels is very expensive.

He said the NDF should consider the government's position that insurgency is an "internal affair and the NDF is an internal group, therefore talks should be held in the country."

Biazon said government and communist leaders "must not engage in technical gobbledygook" that would prevent the resumption of the peace talks.

"A government that is confident of itself will not be afraid to give a little leeway on the issue of venue and party mediators," Biazon said.

'Don't give in'

Senate President Pro Tempore Blas Ople was more inflexible and warned President Macapagal-Arroyo not to give in to the NDF. He said this would have a "potential backlash from the officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines if she is seen to be compromising national sovereignty to the NDF considering the thousand of lives that have been sacrificed by the AFP to defend sovereignty."

If the government agrees to the NDF demand, this means it accepts its belligerency status, he said.

In a campaign sortie in Ilagan, Isabela, former NDF spokesperson and now Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo said both panels should do their homework and come up with concrete proposals before they return to the negotiating table.

Ocampo, the top nominee of the party-list group Bayan Muna for the May 14 elections, said the President should authorize government peace negotiators to deal with specific issues rather than leave them unprepared during the peace talks.

"It is annoying, for example, when a person striking a deal would say 'I will leave and (consult with) my (mother) if she will (accept) your proposal'," he said.

"What is happening is that the NDF is presenting its proposals, but the government has no counter-proposals. Ultimately, when the talks resume, government negotiators want to set aside what was previously agreed upon. Eventually, there is no progress and there is no finishing stage," Ocampo said.

'Less favored' rebs

Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) said it is holding peace talks with the government, but claimed the latter was favoring the NDF, citing the release of political prisoners identified with the latter.

"The release of political prisoners should not be selective. So far, those who have been released are identified with Sison," said Nilo de la Cruz, RPA-ABB head.

He said the government is still reviewing the confidence-building measures his group and the Estrada administration had agreed upon.

"Our talks with the government is running smoothly," De la Cruz told the INQUIRER. "They have been stalled only because of the change of administration."

He said his group, a breakaway faction of the Communist Party of the Philippines, is holding "regular communication" with acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and another government emissary he refused to identify.

He denied speculations that his group has been left out even as he criticized both the government and the NDF for focusing on "unimportant" issues like venue. *With reports from Christian V. Esguerra in Manila and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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REUNION DENNIS SABANGAN

Bhots Elis hugs his wife and month-old baby at Camp Crame after he and 23 other suspects of the Rizal Day bombings—all residents of the Muslim housing project Maharlika Village—were released Friday. The National Bureau of Investigation also cleared the Moro Islamic Liberation Front of the bombings, which killed at least 22 persons in Metro Manila on Dec. 30. *(Story on Page A7.)*

Gov't to seek help of Swiss parliament

(From page A1)

many, who met with officials in those countries to work out an arrangement seeking to secure evidence against the Araneta couple.

"What we have right now are the (International Mutual Assistance on Criminal Matters or Imac) petitions and the independent work of investigators like Reiner Jacobi. We will see if we can marry the two approaches," he said, referring to the Australian investigator who exposed the alleged money-laundering attempt.

The Imac is an agreement that Manila has invoked with Bern and Berlin in its attempt to verify the Marcos accounts and have the alleged funds transferred into an escrow account in the Philippines.

What the PCGG intends to do is to tap other forms of "official" help by engaging the Swiss parliament in the inquiry into Marcos assets allegedly stashed in Switzerland.

Sarmiento noted that under the Philippine justice system, some cases of national importance were still being coursed through the Senate blue ribbon committee for investigation.

"Maybe they (members of the Swiss parliament) can do that, too," and open an inquiry into the Marcos wealth, the PCGG official said.

Fresh approaches

Sarmiento said the PCGG would try new approaches to recovering the alleged wealth after it was reported that German investigators had evidence to show that the Aranetas tried to transfer their funds from the Union Bank of Switzerland to the Deutsche Bank in Dusseldorf in February.

"We will review the approach in searching for the ill-gotten wealth, Sarmiento told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"We have to check and adopt other ways and means to recover the Marcoses' ill-gotten wealth. We need to explore all avenues," he stressed.

Salonga agreed that the PCGG needed "fresh approaches" in tracking down Marcos' assets.

But Sarmiento stressed that the PCGG would not engage in what he had earlier called "extra legal" approaches practiced by Jacobi, unless there were instructions from Malacañang.

The PCGG is taking a second look at Irene's alleged $13.2-billion account in UBS despite an independent report by international auditor Price Waterhouse Coopers indicating that the account contained only 20 million Swiss francs.

The auditing firm was commissioned last year by Swiss authorities upon the PCGG's request through the Imac bilateral agreement.

'Go to Interpol'

Sarmiento said he would also seek the counsel of Salonga, the first chair of the PCGG, on enlisting the help of the Swiss Federal Council, as the PCGG under Salonga's administration did in the '80s.

Salonga, who has estimated that the Marcoses are worth around $10 billion, had also expressed serious doubts over the existence of Irene's alleged $13.2-billion "885931" account.

The former PCGG chair and Senate president said "we should do what we can with all the available contacts we still have."

He also suggested that the PCGG could "go to the Interpol," whose main offices are located in the Hague.

He noted that the PCGG had been previously successful in getting the Swiss to freeze known Marcos accounts and later transfer the deposits into an escrow account at the Philippine National Bank.

"This is not without precedent. In fact, in April 1986—without application from the Philippine government—the Swiss Federal Council issued motu propio a freeze order on all Marcos accounts in Switzerland," former Solicitor General Frank Chavez said.

The alleged Araneta account was not included in the freeze order since it was reportedly discovered more than a decade later.

Salonga criticized the PCGG for not investigating "the Marcoses for the ill-gotten wealth they still have abroad, which they were trying to launder through the German bank."

He also noted that the PCGG has still not collected Marcos tax liabilities amounting to more than P24 billion. He said the tax liability should be worth P40-50 billion.

Jacobi: Give me 4 weeks

For his part, Jacobi said that if the government re-appoints him as its consultant and liaison officer in Europe to recover the alleged Marcos billions, "I can get things done in four weeks."

Jacobi has been pursuing the case of the family's supposed hidden wealth unofficially and on his own.

He claimed that the alleged bank assets could be almost immediately transferred to Manila once those involved in hiding the money in Switzerland are exposed.

His plan now is to expose "everybody who was involved in hiding the Marcos wealth," particularly in Switzerland and the Philippines.

But he said that these were "very powerful people," and contended that he would be more "effective" if he had government backing.

"This is the only way to do it," said Jacobi, who was hired by the government to recover the Marcos wealth in 1988 but was later accused of being a conman.

The Swiss government asked the PCGG to revoke his appointment in 1991 after he allegedly discovered a "mother account" and gold deposits of the Marcoses in Switzerland.

No recovery, no pay

Jacobi repeated that he would also expose "at the proper time" a second signatory to the 885931 account. He has said earlier that the signatory was a male foreigner whom the Aranetas could "not control."

Chavez also pushed for Jacobi's "immediate reappointment" as "PCGG liaison officer for Europe on a no-recovery-no-pay basis."

"After all, he has been supplying significant leads, documents and information to the PCGG for over 10 years without pay. He has not in fact been reimbursed for expenses," Chavez said.

Bad idea?

David Chaikin, Jacobi's lawyer and an expert on money-laundering cases, said contacting former Swiss lawyers of the PCGG was a bad idea.

He said Swiss lawyers hired by the PCGG under Salonga's administration could only make representations but not carry out any investigation on behalf of Manila.

"Swiss lawyers who carry out an investigation on behalf of a foreign government potentially commit a crime under Swiss law. No one should expect that the Philippine government would find out anything new by using Swiss lawyers as investigators," he said.

He also said that the government's latest requests to the Swiss would again pass through Dieter Jann, the Swiss magistrate who told the PCGG in 1999 that account 885931 did not exist.

UBS was forced to admit later that the account number did exist.

Chaikin also said that the Interpol would only refer the case to the Swiss police which "have never been used to execute search warrants on Swiss banks."

He claimed that Jann would just ask the bank to respond to the request, and would most likely deny it again.

Reyes retires today as AFP chief

'I will be retiring from the service, not from life'

BY CARLITO PABLO

GEN. Angelo Reyes retires today as chief of staff of the Armed Forces, capping years of distinguished service that earned him the tag "a soldier for all seasons."

"When I retire, I will be retiring from the service, not from life," said Reyes, who has made a mark in both war and peace.

As before, Reyes declined to be drawn into a discussion of his being a strong contender for the defense portfolio.

"I don't know anything about that, and for sure I'm not applying for that job," he said yesterday.

Reyes served as AFP chief of staff for 20 months.

From April to September last year, the AFP under his command launched a blistering campaign in Mindanao that saw the fall of Camp Abubakar and 45 other camps of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In January, the AFP withdrew its support from the disgraced Joseph Estrada, and observers described this move as the death blow to an administration reeling from numerous scandals.

REYES

On regional security, the military under Reyes saw the resumption of defense cooperation with the United States through the "Balikatan 2000" joint war exercises.

The AFP also sent a contingent to the then troubled East Timor, where Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos served as the head of the United-Nations-sponsored peacekeeping crew—the first Filipino and Southeast Asian to lead UN forces.

Reyes held a total of 22 military assignments, starting as junior officer of the Army's elite Special Forces upon his graduation in 1966 from the Philippine Military Academy.

He made it up the ladder to become chief of the Southern Command and, later, of the Army, before ending his journey as the country's No. 1 soldier.

Reyes also served as military assistant to then Prime Minister Cesar Virata, and held several duties at the AFP.

With his military education consisting of a mix of specialized and service—required courses, Reyes also undertook extensive education in the civilian sector.

He completed, among others, a master's degree in public administration at the Harvard University in Massachusetts as a scholar, and another master's degree in business administration at the Asian Institute of Management.

With the lingering euphoria over People Power II, to which the military contributed, it looked for a while that Reyes would leave the AFP in a blaze of glory.

However, his last few weeks in office were marred by revelations of corruption in the military as well as of infighting among senior generals.

Reyes' record had suffered a blot when he chose to side with the Marine Corps, which had demanded the ouster of Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong when the then Navy chief publicly questioned alleged financial irregularities in the corps.

Dirt also flew fast and thick during the race for the next AFP chief, when President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that she was not extending Reyes' term.

A few days before he was ousted from the presidency, Estrada extended Reyes' term to the year 2002 in an apparent effort to secure the general's loyalty.

Commenting on the controversies hounding the military, Reyes said these were mere media hype, "more imagined than real."

"We have a very, very professional AFP. Let us contribute in helping to maintain this professionalism," he said.

Reyes said unnamed parties were sowing intrigues in the military.

"It will not work, and will never work," he said.

Biazon: Nominees with 'issues' should not get DND post

SEN. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday said he would file a bill in the new Congress which would allow for the appointment of former military generals, particularly the Armed Forces chief, as defense secretary only three years after retirement.

This would prevent the defense secretary from being able to influence the military leadership structure, Biazon said.

The senator said this condition was also necessary, particularly when a retired general taking over the top defense post had some "issues" against him.

Biazon also urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to "de-politicize" the military before appointing outgoing Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes as the next defense secretary.

The President is said to be inclined to appoint Reyes, who will retire today, to the top defense post.

He said the jockeying for Reyes' replacement had shown how politicized and divided the military had become.

"For the first time in the country, we saw contenders for the position in the AFP often soliciting political support from politicians, (employing) mudslinging against another and openly trying to get an alignment of forces within the ranks to (get their) support," Biazon said.

The senator also said the issues raised against Reyes could become "baggage" for him in the event that he is appointed defense secretary.

"If I were the President, I would not appoint General Reyes immediately as secretary of national defense without resolving first those issues raised by elements within the military," Biazon told reporters.

Employees in the defense department have accused Reyes and former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado of benefiting from the allegedly overpriced purchase of bomb-sniffing dogs.

Christine Avendaño

Slain kidnap victim grew up in 'interesting times'

Interment set today

BY MARTIN MARFIL

THE UP Baguio journalism student who was abducted and killed together with a woman friend last Sunday will be buried today, his 23rd birthday.

Giancarlo Angelo Posadas Leung will be interred at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque after Mass at the Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City.

Leung and his friend, Tihani Tingal, a recent UP Baguio graduate, were abducted in Baguio City last week by still unidentified persons who shot and killed them after the gang suspected that their families had contacted police.

Their bodies were found Sunday in separate places in Pampanga.

Tingal, according to the Leungs, will be buried next week after the arrival of her mother from abroad.

Leung's mother said her youngest son, who was born in 1978, grew up in "interesting times" in Baguio City.

Those years, Lota Leung said, saw the rise of rebel priest Fr. Conrado Balweg and the big Baguio earthquake that killed hundreds.

Some of her friends who were in media at the time might have influenced her son into joining a profession where he could touch the lives of others.

Ironically, it was his death that touched others as his relatives recounted yesterday how people who never met the young man came to his wake to express their condolences.

One relative said she was approached by a group that had come all the way from Cavite to express their sympathies.

The group said they did not know the victim but they came anyway.

A student who came with a Manila-based group said she transferred to a Baguio school and would not have made it through her first year in that city had it not been for Giancarlo.

"He was always very helpful," his mother agreed.

Other sympathizers said they were "impressed" by the victim's father—Charles—who asked that his son's killers not be slain in return.

Investigators have chosen to remain silent on the status of their probe but said they were eyeing fraternity rivalry as the motive for the kidnapping and murder of Leung and Tingal.

The case is the ninth involving kidnapping for ransom since President Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in two months ago.

It was the first case that resulted in the death of its victims, however.

This prompted mourners at the wake yesterday to note that the government appeared to be helpless against criminals.

"What is happening to this country? What kind of government is this?" said a woman who asked not to be identified.

Aguinaldo's capture to be remembered

THE NATIONAL Historical Institute (NHI) and the Committee for the Centennial Celebration of the Capture of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo will spearhead commemorative activities on March 20, 21 and 23 at Ilagan and Palanan, Isabela, respectively.

The theme of the celebration is "Sandaang Pugay Kamay kay Heneral Miong."

Former Prime Minister Cesar E.A. Virata, grandson of the late general, will be the guest of honor and speaker in commemorative rites to be held at 7 a.m. on March 23 at the Liwasang Aguinaldo, Palanan, Isabela. NHI Chair Dr. Pablo Trillana III, Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy, and Palanan Mayor Natividad Bernardo will assist him in the wreath-laying rites and unveiling of historical marker.

Trillana will deliver a centennial message for the occasion. Dy will introduce the guest of honor and speaker, while Vice Gov. Edwin Uy will also deliver a brief talk.

Dr. Regino Paular, chief of the Historical Education Division of the NHI, will reflect on Aguinaldo's capture and heroism. Jose Rosendo, Chair of the Isabela Cultural and Historical Committee, will give a brief talk on the subject "Reflection of a Leader." Romy Sacay, Porfeo Encomienda and Reynaldo Mariano will mount the Filipino-American War exhibit at Palanan, Isabela, coupled with wreath-laying and historical marker installation activities.

A dramatization of the events that led to capture Aguinaldo's will be performed by DECS-Isabela to enliven the commemorative program. Arrival and departure honors will be given by the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police.

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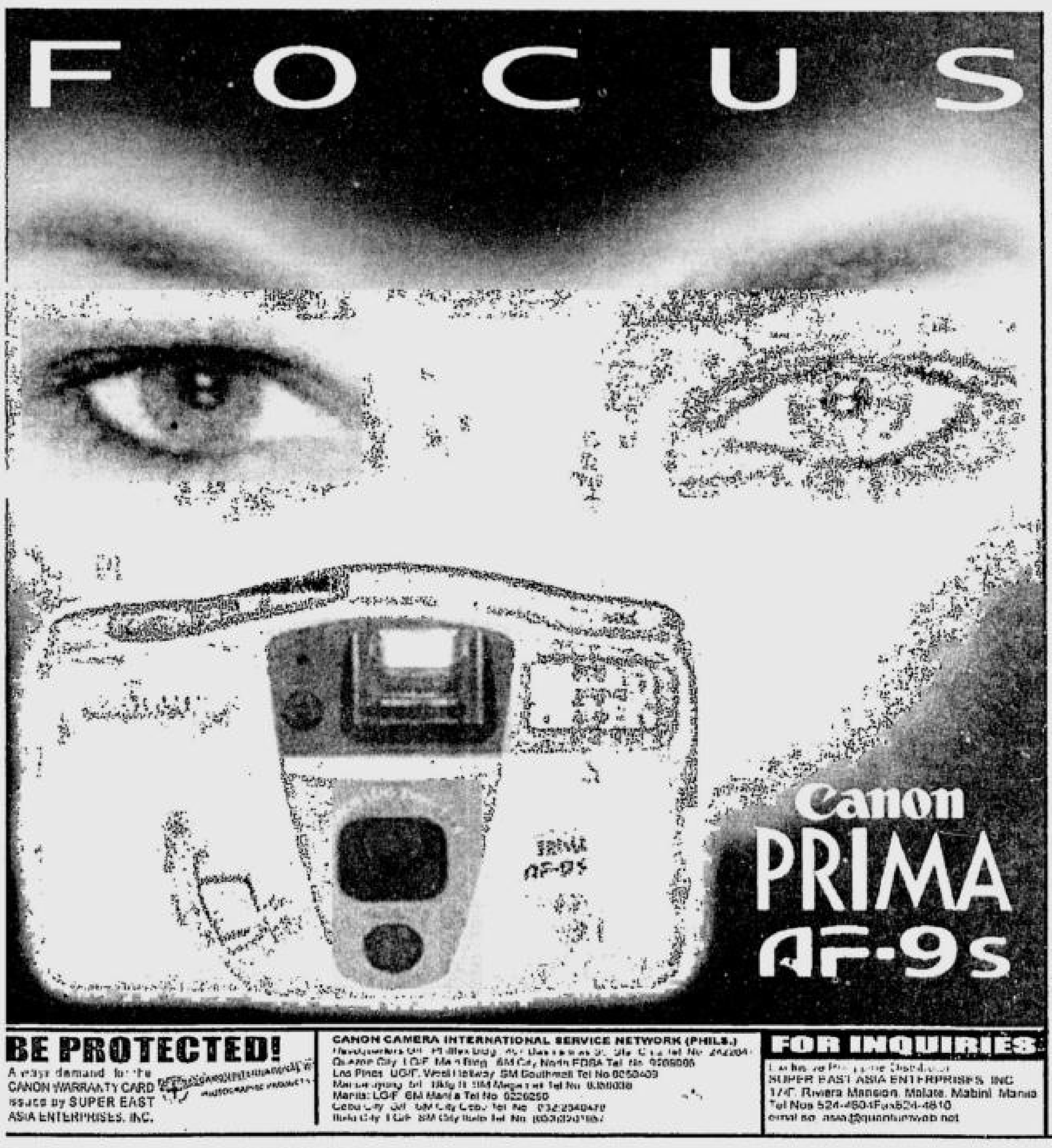

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CAMPAIGN TRAIL

SOLITA "Mareng Winnie" Monsod signs autographs for supporters at the autograph signing session at SM Manila as she tries to project herself as a member of a new breed of politicians who are both qualified and upright.

Estrada, bets pitting rich vs poor, says Winnie

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada and the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Pwersa ng Masa (LDP-PnM) are bereft of real issues for this election. That's why they are resorting to pitting the rich against the poor.

People Power Coalition senatorial candidate "Mareng" Winnie Monsod said: "The poor should be warned against being used by Estrada and the opposition in this campaign. They will raise all sorts of lies to gain their sympathy."

The biggest lie so far peddled by Estrada and the opposition is that Edsa II was allegedly a "people power of the rich," Monsod said in a press statement.

"The Filipinos know that this is not true. The masses that came to Edsa to call for Estrada's resignation came from all walks of life—workers, students, urban poor, professionals, clergy, small entrepreneurs, civil society members and businessmen," Monsod said.

There were not only the poor but they likewise represented a broad spectrum of Filipinos concerned with the plight of the poor, she said.

She added while some prominent people were at the forefront of the Edsa II movement, the bulk of the protesters came from the ranks of the poor and the middle class.

"The poor are being fooled by Estrada and the opposition by claiming that Edsa II was a people power of the rich," she added.

Monsod said the irony of Estrada's drama is that Estrada is a very rich man pretending to be poor. "He was born rich and has become even richer after he became president. He used his mass-based appeal, which he nurtured while a movie actor to gain political power and enrich himself," she said.

"Mareng" Winnie said Estrada's record in the two and a half years that he was the president showed no concrete proof that he helped the poor, except by giving land titles, which even proved to be fake, and giving doleouts during his visits to depressed areas, but he had done nothing to elevate the plight of the underprivileged.

Monsod asked: "What noteworthy projects for the poor did he undertake during his two years in office? None!"

She said revelations during the Senate hearing on "juetengate" and the impeachment trial showed that Estrada used his position to enrich himself.

She said it has become public knowledge that Estrada received protection money from "jueteng" lords and multimillion-peso commissions from government transactions, and diverted tobacco money for his personal use.

"Estrada has to answer how he was able to accumulate huge bank deposits and build multimillion-peso mansions for his mistresses out of his modest salaries alone, while the economy sank to unprecedented levels during his presidency," Monsod said.

Earlier, some of Estrada's close associates have executed affidavits disclosing how he had accumulated multimillion-peso commissions from government transactions.

Mark Jimenez, Estrada's former adviser on Latin American affairs, executed two affidavits revealing that he issued 10 checks to Estrada totaling P346 million, including a P126-million advance commission for the Equitable-PCI Bank merger that was brokered by Jimenez.

Former Social Security System head Carlos "Chucky" Arellano and Government Service Insurance System president Federico Pascual disclosed before government investigators how Estrada forced the two institutions into buying P1.8-billion worth of Belle Corp. stocks, from which he allegedly earned P189.7 million in commission.

Angara says Erap, friends not giving money to Puwersa

BY DONA PAZZIBUGAN

ESTRADA

COJUANGCO

LUCENA CITY—Opposition senatorial candidate Edgardo Angara yesterday tried to distance the LDP-Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidates from Joseph Estrada, saying the ousted president and his powerful cronies were not backing up their campaign.

Angara, who is also president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, said big businessmen-friends of the disgraced leader have shifted their support to the administration ticket.

Estrada, meanwhile, denied the statement of another political ally, former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, that the Nationalist People's Coalition would junk five of the Puwersa senatorial candidates.

Maceda named the five as former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, Jamby Madrigal, Ombra Tamano, Reuben Canoy and former Sen. Santanina Rasul.

No pending

Estrada said Thursday night that he will still work for a 13-0 sweep by the opposition ticket, which is composed mostly of candidates closely associated with him, including former first lady Loi Ejercito.

"No junking," Estrada said.

Yesterday, Angara said Estrada and his close friend, San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, are not financially contributing to the opposition's campaign.

Earlier, however, a ranking LDP official admitted to the INQUIRER that they were being supported by "big businessmen." The official, however, declined to name them.

The INQUIRER also learned that Cojuangco is lending his private planes for use of the LDP-Puwersa ng Masa candidates in their out-of-town sorties.

The candidates used an eight-seater private plane owned by Cojuangco when they traveled to Samar last week.

Angara said the Puwersa ng Masa senatorial ticket is only getting contributions from "small businessmen."

"Most of the big businessmen backing President Estrada are not with us anymore. It's (expected) that if you are in the administration they (businessmen) will flock to you," he told reporters.

Running dry

People Power Coalition campaign director Paul Aquino the other day claimed the opposition is running out of funds since the government had ordered certain banks to freeze Estrada's accounts with them.

State prosecutors have claimed Estrada's bank accounts, which are believed to contain billions of pesos, came from bribes and "commissions" in high-level business transactions.

Angara, however, denied that they are relying on Estrada's "dirty money" to finance their campaign.

"We don't even have money, much less dirty money. This is from our own pockets. Perhaps the administration is referring to itself because it thinks dirty," he said.

The Puwersa senatorial slate regularly holds week-long out-of-town sorties since the campaign kicked off in February.

Sorties

The candidates have been to Nueva Ecija, to Zamboanga City, Cagayan De Oro City, Bukidnon, Iligan City, Palawan, in Samar and Leyte. This week, they will be in Mindoro, Romblon, Marinduque, Quezon and Batangas.

Among the 13 Puwersa candidates, those who regularly join the sorties are former first lady Loi Ejercito, reelectionist Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Angara, former press secretary Ricardo "Dong" Puno, Madrigal and Tamano.

Former police chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, his Philippine Military Academy batchmate (class '71) reelectionist Sen. Gringo Honasan and Reuben Canoy meanwhile have been keeping away from the party's campaign rallies.

Lacson and Honasan go on their own out-of-town sorties.

Two other LDP guest candidates, former broadcaster Noli de Castro and former defense secretary Orly Mercado. have so far stayed away from the party's sorties.

The LDP's latest guest candidate, former Sen. Santanina Rasul, joined two rallies that were led by Estrada this week—in Smokey Mountain in Tondo and in Lucena City.

Rasul joined the opposition slate after failing to make it to the administration senatorial slate.

NEWSBRIEFS

Villar's call

FORMER Speaker Manuel Villar yesterday urged his colleagues in Congress to ensure the success of a two-day special session beginning Monday where amendments to the election code to allow the special registration of an estimated four million first-time voters will be debated.

"This must be given high priority by legislators. I call on my colleagues to make time to attend the sessions so we could enable millions of young people who will be voting for the first time to participate in the elections," Villar said.

"The question is not who would benefit from the youth vote, but that they are granted their right to suffrage, which is guaranteed by the Constitution," he said.

Opposition insulting youth

PEOPLE Power Coalition senatorial bet Juan Flavier said yesterday the opposition has insulted the Filipino youth for saying they could be manipulated during elections, even as he branded as unfair plans to block the registration of first-time voters.

"The youth are principled and have a mind of their own. They cannot be manipulated into voting for candidates they do not believe in," Flavier said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has called for a special session of Congress next week to amend the Omnibus Election Code to allow a special registration of voters before the May 14 elections.

But in an attempt to frustrate the holding of the special session, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago called on her colleagues in the opposition to boycott the session.

Another opposition senator, John Osmeña, also insulted the youth when he insinuated that the PPC would be using the youth for its own advantage, Flavier said.

Honasan for TAMA

SEN. Gregorio Honasan asked the Department of Health yesterday to speed up implementation of Republic Act No. 8423, otherwise known as the Traditional and Alternative Medicines Act (TAMA).

Alarmed by the skyrocketing prices of medicines, Honasan said he sounded the call after receiving information that the health department has not come up with TAMA's implementing rules and regulations since it was enacted three years ago.

"When we approved the measure in the Senate in 1997, we were hoping the prices of medicines would be reduced by about 25 percent with the development of traditional and alternative medicines," he said.

A sinister plot—Herrera

PEOPLE Power Coalition senatorial bet Ernesto "Boy" Herrera charged the opposition with hatching a "sinister plot" to deprive the Filipino youth of their right to decide their future by threatening to boycott the proposed special session of Congress.

"The right to vote is the highest political right of every citizen of this country. And it is the foundation of a democratic society. To deprive the citizenry of the right to suffrage is the highest form of betrayal of democracy," Herrera said.

The special session is designed to approve an amendatory bill seeking to allow the registration of first-time voters.

NOLI "Kabayan" de Castro acknowledges supporters from the sunroof of his campaign vehicle. He is batting for a covenant for an honest and orderly election to be signed by all senatorial candidates.

Noli proposes pact for clean, honest elections

INDEPENDENT senatorial candidate Noli de Castro has urged fellow candidates to agree to a covenant for the holding of an honest election that every Filipino can be proud of.

The former broadcaster asked the People Power Coalition, the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, the Nationalist People's Coalition and even the independents and the party-list aspirants to rally behind his proposed "Kasunduan Para sa Mamamayan."

Mamamayan is an acronym for "Malinis, Maayos at Mapayapang Eleksiyon para sa Bayan. (Clean, Orderly and Peaceful Elections for the People)"

De Castro made the proposal in the wake of fears of violence and bloodshed in the growing list of political "hot spots" in the country.

He said he had earlier met with some leaders of the major political parties to discuss the actual date of signing of the covenant.

De Castro said it is the duty of every one to ensure that the election would be free from violence and fraud.

Loi asks Gloria: Save cattle industry

LABAN ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidate Dr. Loi Ejercito Estrada has called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop her rhetoric and buckle down to work to save the cattle industry from imminent collapse.

Dr. Estrada issued the call following what she called the "grand show" of Ms Macapagal and her officials eating beef products in popular food chains to reassure Filipino consumers of the safety of local and imported beef.

With the outbreak of the mad cow disease in Europe, Filipino consumers have stopped beef purchases despite government assurances beef products available in the country are mad cow disease-free.

Martin Gomez, president of the Cattle Feedlot Association of the Philippines (CFAP), earlier revealed a 50 to 60-percent drop in consumption of local beef products.

The drop in sales of beef products has prompted cattle producers to lay off at least 30 percent of their workers. "And that is bad for the country's unemployment situation," Dr. Estrada said.

She said that since there is a popular fear of local beef products, the sale of cow's milk may subsequently suffer, much to the detriment of the younger population.

"Milk products might later on be affected by the mad cow scare. Why can't Mrs. Arroyo detect the danger signals to the country's health?" she asked.

Dr. Estrada said that once the local beef industry collapses, the country will become solely dependent on imported beef. She also said that this would even be hazardous as levels of contamination of imported beef still have to be determined.

Besides, the head of the cattle producers said that the prices of beef imported from Australia, which is still mad cow disease-free, have been raised at an alarming rate.

SENATORIAL candidate Ernesto Herrera signs the covenant reaffirming support to the People Power Coalition by the Quezon City chapter of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil) and the Quezon City Alliance for Social Change during consultations held by the administration-backed coalition at the University of the Philippines. Awaiting their turn to sign the document are fellow PPC candidates Kiko Pangilinan, Joker Arroyo, Obet Pagdanganan and Liwayway Chato.

Palace cuts down on Erap security

By Dona Pazzibugan

LUCENA CITY—Malacañang has cut down somewhat on the security detail assigned to Joseph Estrada.

The ousted president said Thursday night that Malacañang recalled on Wednesday 19 of the 51 military officers and men serving as his guards.

He is left with a security contingent that is still several times bigger than those assigned to other former presidents.

Estrada said he did not mind the cutback.

"OK *lang*," he said when interviewed after leading a campaign rally here of the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidates.

The disgraced leader arrived here the other night with some members of the Presidential Security Group who are known to have been with him since he was vice president.

He was also accompanied by a handful of burly civilian men wearing headbands that read "Samahang Erap Movement."

The reduction in the number of Estrada's guards came following newspaper reports last week that he was enjoying the largest security detail among the former presidents.

It was outgoing Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes who assigned to Estrada three officers and 48 enlisted men.

Former President Corazon Aquino has three guards including one Air Force officer, and former President Fidel Ramos has 13, two of them officers.

Estrada, who is facing plunder charges, has been under close watch by authorities. He has repeatedly denied that he would flee to escape prosecution.

The INQUIRER had also reported that former PSG commander Brig. Gen. Rodulfo Diaz still takes charge of security measures for Estrada despite his having been officially recalled to his mother unit, the Marine Corps.

In an interview Tuesday, Estrada said he believed that some of his guards had been planted to spy on his movements.

He said he did not think the military was doing him a favor by giving him so many guards because he had to feed them.

RIZAL DAY ATTACKS

NBI clears MILF on bombings

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has categorically ruled out the involvement of top officials of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the Rizal Day bombings last year, which killed at least 22 and injured more than 100.

The agency failed to establish any connection between the Moro rebels and the three suspects who are now in government custody, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said during his regular press conference yesterday.

The investigation by the NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division (AFCCD) showed that the Dec. 30 attacks were not a Moro operation although the three suspects had "Muslim-sounding names," said Wycoco.

"We are sure they are not MILF members," he said.

During the Estrada administration, the Philippine National Police implicated the Moro separatist group in the bloody carnage.

The then PNP chief, Panfilo Lacson, even filed multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder charges against MILF chair Salamat Hashim and other top MILF officials.

But Wycoco admitted that the case was far from solved as the NBI had yet to identify the brains behind the bombings or the suspects' "linkages."

According to Wycoco, one of the three suspects in the Dec. 30 bombings, identified as Bassal Diamla, had also intended to bomb Malacañang the same day.

He was arrested by members of the Presidential Security Group before he could detonate the bomb, Wycoco said. Diamla, who is now under the custody of the Intelligence Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), has maintained he is innocent.

"We are still coordinating with the Isafp to ascertain where he (Diamla) was spotted in the Palace, and what part of the Palace he intended to bomb," Wycoco said.

Police said the attackers had used improvised 1-kg black powder bombs with timing devices. Diamla was carrying the same type of bomb, identified as TNT (trinitrotoluene).

Wycoco said the two other suspects were being held by an NBI regional office in the South. He would not reveal their names.

"They are actually Muslims but they (have) also worked with some Christians (from Dipolog City)," he said.

Wycoco, who identified the two as Diamla's "co-perpetrators," said the two had already owned up to their part in the bombings.

He said they attested that Diamla was one of those who perpetrated the Dec. 30 bombing attacks on five places in Metro Manila, which killed and injured many, including children and two policemen.

The synchronized bombings occurred at a Light Rail Transit couch in Blumentritt, Manila; Plaza Ferguson in front of the US Embassy in Manila; an abandoned gasoline station in front of Dusit Hotel in Makati City; a passenger bus in Cubao, Quezon City; and the cargo handling section of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Wycoco said Diamla was also a suspect in a string of bombing cases in the South before the Rizal Day bombings.

He said Diamla had exploded a bomb in one of the shopping malls in Iligan City, and in some public places in Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato and Maguindanao.

The two other suspects admitted to NBI investigators that they had prepared the bombs and that they were the ones who set these off, Wycoco said.

"They are now in the custody of our regional offices in the region and corresponding cases will be filed soon," he said.

Asked about the possible motive for the bombings, Wycoco said: "According to them, they (wanted) to make a statement against the Estrada administration, but we are checking this angle also. It might be that their handlers want it to appear that way, but there might be another objective. We are looking at this, too."

According to Wycoco, the two categorically stated that they were not MILF members.

"They said they are not MILF, they were not ordered by the MILF and they had some Christian companions with them when they did it. So it's not really a Muslim operation per se (although) some of the perpetrators (have) Muslim-sounding names. We cannot say at this point that (because) they are Muslims, that's why they did it. There must be something else," Wycoco stressed.

The PNP-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) of the Estrada administration blamed the synchronized terror attacks on Salamat, MILF vice chair for political affairs Ghadzali Jaafar, vice chair for military affairs Al Haj Murad and vice chair for internal affairs Aleem Aziz Mimbantas.

Also implicated were MILF members Ismael Abbas, Safilla Unos and Mohammed Guindolongan.

Lacson also blamed Salamat and his followers for a series of bombings in Metro Manila in May last year—at the SM Megamall and Glorietta shopping centers—and subsequently charged them.

Sr. Supt. Raul Bacalzo, director of the CIDG-National Capital Region, claimed that Salamat and his officials orchestrated the bombings as part of a "feasibility project."

He said the bombings "had long been conceived by Salamat."

Bacalzo said the PNP believed that the plot to bomb Metro Manila was aimed at turning the media's attention away from the Mindanao conflict. He said the plot would be carried out by 12 *mujahideen* (freedom fighters) within 30 days.

Groups push for affordable health care

By Norman Bordadora

ORGANIZED public health workers want the 12th Congress to drastically increase government spending for public health in order to make health services more affordable to all Filipinos nationwide.

But the Health Alliance for Democracy (HEAD) and the Alliance for Health Workers (AHW) pointed out that the so-called "corporatization" of government hospitals was not the correct method to use to increase revenues in the health sector.

They said that while this could raise the funds needed to improve the facilities of medical institutions, it only served to further limit access to medical attention.

"We want the next Congress to prioritize health care and allocate, per World Health Organization standards, at least 5 percent of the gross national product for public health," HEAD spokesperson Amy Chavez told the INQUIRER.

"This is not just for the public health sector but also for the people's health in general," she said, adding that the group had approached a number of candidates for Congress to request them to include the proposal in their platforms.

According to Chavez, the current budget for public health allocates just 40 centavos for every Filipino. "This is not even enough to buy one Biogesic tablet," she noted.

AHW spokesperson Emma Manuel said the government policy to turn government-run hospitals into corporations with corresponding boards of directors "is an abandonment of the state's responsibility to provide the people basic social services."

Manuel said the policy was making government hospitals more inaccessible to impoverished patients.

She said that for example, simple medicines that were supposedly given free in these institutions were now being sold at unaffordable prices.

"They say the hospitals are just being 'corporatized,' but in the end they will be privatized. This should not be the case," Manuel said.

Chavez added that one such government hospital was spending its revenues from its operations to purchase more beds for the private rooms and not the wards.

This makes health care inaccessible to the poor who can only afford a bed in the ward, she said.

Both Chavez and Manuel said their groups were also batting for lower costs of medicine, a stop to the "streamlining" of public health, and added benefits for health workers.

"Many people die because they could not buy medicines," said Chavez.

Speaking for health workers, Manuel said: "We are already underpaid and still overworked."

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OPINION

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 16 No. 99
ISSN 0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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Issues worthy of debate

EDITORIAL

THE OPPOSITION senatorial candidate, Edgardo Angara, sounded a forlorn note when he recently lamented the deficit of issues in the senatorial election. The absence of issues is a function of two things: first, senatorial elections have historically and essentially been a contest of personalities; and, secondly, the parties have been so fragmented that it is next to impossible for them to package a campaign based on programs or policies.

The campaign tactics of individual candidates themselves illustrate the personalized nature of the campaign. The thrust is toward saturating space with a candidate's posters that carry his or her name in bold type and excluding references to team mates or party identification. Thus, the candidate with the fattest campaign chest is revealed by his exposure. We don't have to name names, but the public has an idea of who has the logistics. When money talks, issues are lost.

During the two-party system, there was a semblance of party discipline. Even if posters emphasized a certain candidate, the poster carried the party label, as well as the members of the party ticket. Today, senatorial candidates are no less cannibalistic in devouring their comrades' publicity paraphernalia than piranhas. The game is to each his own, and the norm applies also to the administration's People Power Coalition, although the PPC has apparently more cohesion than the opposition party, Puwersa ng Masa.

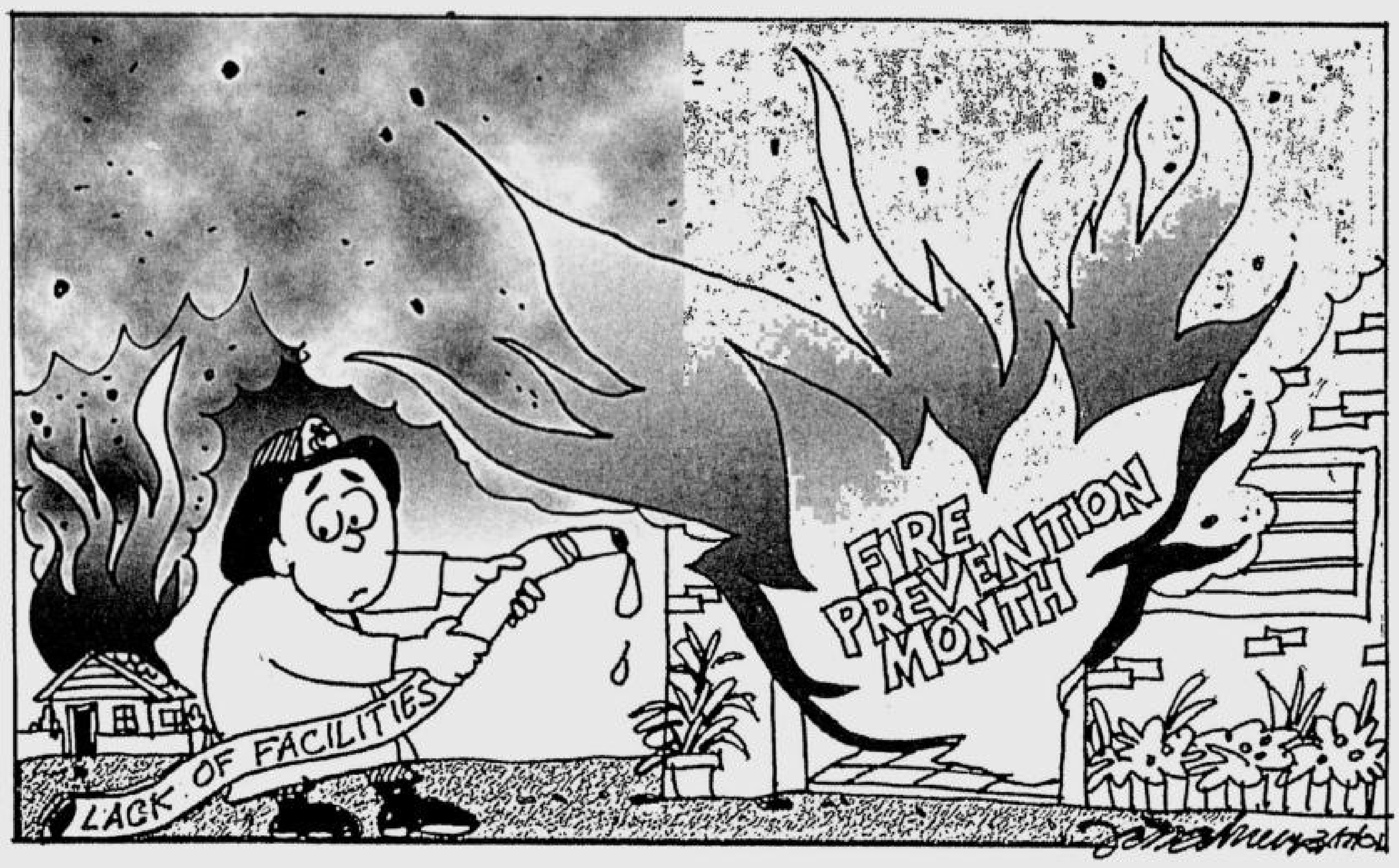
The opposition ticket is further dragged down by the burden of some of its members who have proclaimed themselves as "guest candidates" in order not to be stained by the stigma attached to deposed President Joseph Estrada. The term "guest candidate" has an honored and respectable origin. It was attached to a candidate invited to join a party's ticket because the individual worth of that candidate can enhance the party's electoral chances. Such honors were accorded eminent politicians like Senators Claro M. Recto and Lorenzo Tañada—names that graced opposition tickets in the past. Anyone who claims himself to be a "guest candidate" without proving his intellectual credentials to justify taking a seat in the Senate is either nursing a gigantic ego or degrading its tradition.

The opposition coalition itself has appropriated the name Puwersa ng Masa. The masses—a.k.a. the poor—are again being hoodwinked to improve the electoral chances of the opposition. The politician who originally claimed proprietary rights over the title of speaking for the poor or the masses—i.e., Estrada—has been utterly discredited and has been shown to have done nothing for the poor except to give them handouts that are used up in one day.

None of the opposition candidates has come up with programs for the masses. So, poverty is not the issue at all in this campaign, although it would help the poor if senatorial candidates could show a more genuine concern for them by proposing anti-poverty programs instead of repeating tired slogans that have been deflated by the failure of the Estrada administration to help the poor.

The administration coalition, PPC, can't be said to have done better than its rival in framing programs and policy issues on which the Senate elections would be decided. There is, however, an implicit issue in this election, although not the kind Angara has in mind. The issue is that this election is about the expansion of the mandate of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the rejection of the political values for which Estrada was thrown out of office. The issue is about corruption and plunder perpetrated with the use of presidential powers to extract and accumulate wealth for personal gain. People power rejected these values and it is a handicap to the opposition candidates to be associated with Estrada and his values.

If there should be a debate, it should come from the issue of the further legitimation of the Macapagal administration and the rejection of the predatory values of Estrada. Most of the opposition candidates were closely associated with Estrada, except those who have the conceit to call themselves "guest" candidates. With the campaign polarized on this issue, the opposition candidates should sink or swim with it. On the other hand, the PPC should not hesitate to identify itself as the party which is determined to file plunder charges against Estrada and send him to jail. It's an issue worth fighting for.



Box office for public office

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I'M not an intellectual snob, nor have I the right to be. I hold only a bachelor's degree and have not studied in the exclusive precincts of Harvard and Oxford. I could well be one of the "insects" referred to by Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who looks down with pure contempt on anyone who has not shared a summer course with her at Cambridge.

You might instead call me an intellectual slob. Whatever additional knowledge I have gained in law, I learned through personal selective readings and not through formal instruction at Yale or the Sorbonne. My immediate concern upon graduation from law school was earning a living. My family was not wealthy enough to subsidize my further education abroad, nor could I have managed on privileged scholarships.

On the Supreme Court, I sat with colleagues with masteral and doctoral degrees from the Ivy League universities. I did not feel inferior to them and they, to their credit, did not brandish their foreign diplomas at me. It was useless anyway to trumpet their academic achievements. We lesser mortals did not stand in awe of our bedegreed colleagues but regarded them as our equals if not less so in some cases.

To be sure, not all persons with post-graduate degrees from foreign universities are certifiable eggheads. A few may have even barely passed but for some tolerant academic allowance for their "language difficulties." Some of my former classmates did not seem any better in the basic law course than they were after their stint in graduate schools abroad.

Chief Justice Roberto Concepcion graduated summa cum laude from the University of Santo Tomas and topped the bar examination in 1924. He did not seek post-graduate degrees but immediately engaged in private practice. Chief Justice Andres R. Narvasa graduated magna cum laude from the same school and placed second in the 1951 bar examination. He also did not enroll in foreign graduate studies.

Neither did Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee, Ateneo's own summa cum laude and bar topnotcher in 1940, who immediately began practicing law rather than pursue higher studies. Perhaps he was more interested at that time in pursuing his beloved Pilar in far-off Laoag. Like Concepcion and Narvasa, this mere bachelor of laws was later to display his brilliance as one of our most distinguished jurists. All three of them eventually became honorary doctors of law, but that was mere icing on the cake.

At the risk of being accused of sour grapes, I say all this to disabuse the overly impressionable that it takes no less than a post-graduate degree abroad to qualify as an intellectual in this country. Myself excluded, there are many persons among us who are unquestionably intelligent, and some highly so, without a masteral or doctoral degree or even a bachelor's diploma.

Our Conrado de Quiros, for example, who says he quit college during his last semester in UP, can write rings around many a Litt. D. holder whose only evidence of his supposed talent is the letters after his name. There are many other non-graduates among us who are definitely better than some self-important academicians who would even add their DCL in their R.I.P.

Of course, one does not have to be a college student to be able to exercise his suffrages responsibly. Scholastic excellence is not a pre-requisite of good citizenship. Ordinary intelligence is all the civic-minded person needs to distinguish between the competent and the mediocre among the various aspirants for elective office. Choosing the right candidate is not that all difficult for the discerning voter.

We can expect, though, that the graduate from high school, at least, can vote more wisely than one who has had only a modicum of formal education. Unfortunately, even the illiterates are now permitted to vote under the 1987 Constitution, which *prohibits* literacy as a suffrage qualification. The improbable justification is that they can now adequately inform themselves of the election issues through the modern communications media.

Proof or refutation of this theory is found in the wild reception of the deposed President Estrada by his hysterical supporters in Tondo recently. They probably had not followed his impeachment trial or, having done so, did not understand or rejected the damaging disclosures against him.

Literacy is supposed to at least provide a minimum guaranty of the voter's intelligence. The trouble is that many of those who do know how to read and write still succumb to the false attractions of popular entertainers more familiar with stagecraft than statecraft. It is worse with the illiterates who cannot even read about an actor's lack of credentials but will support him nonetheless because he is a *star*. That is the ultimate qualification.

Responsible voting is especially now necessary because we are deluged again with showbiz candidates who think their popularity at the box office entitles them to public office. An unthinking electorate may again permit themselves to be seduced by these make-believe heroes vanquishing the villains, like Joseph Estrada shooting down the *jueteng* lords.

I have more than once advocated a reexamination of the Constitution with a view, among others, to prescribing reasonable academic qualifications for elective officials, Members of the judiciary, the Constitutional Commissions, and the Ombudsman and his deputies are subject to such necessary requirements. But, other than simple literacy, no further credentials are provided for elective officials from the president of the Philippines to the barangay councilors.

Until such an amendment is adopted, I suggest that the Commission on Elections publicize in its information campaign the educational attainments, if any, of all the candidates. This should include the movie and television stars who, for all we know may not have even finished grade school but believe they can be like Abraham Lincoln. It is time for many of our voters, especially the illiterates, to *think*.

No chance this May for absentee voting bill

COMMENTARY

Jeremaiah M. Opiniano
Institute on Church and Social Issues

THE GOOD bishop Ramon Arguelles of the Military Ordinariate has reiterated to the government to consider the absentee voting bill in time for the coming May elections. In his message for this year's National Migrants' Sunday on March 4, Arguelles even asked Congress to conduct a special session just before the May 14 polls to have the absentee voting bill passed.

Arguelles, who chairs the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (Ecmi) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), is among the people, many of them coming from civil society groups, who have called for the passage of the absentee voting bill. The bill, formally known as the "Absentee Voting by Qualified Filipinos Act," has been lobbied since 1986 when Congress had statesmen like Jovito Salonga and the late Ramon Mitra as Senate president and House speaker, respectively.

With absentee voting, Filipinos may vote in national and local elections by mail, or by casting their ballots in the country's different diplomatic missions.

Fourteen years have passed, and absentee voting remains an elusive electoral dream for the Philippines. More so to migrant Filipinos who have continually remitted dollars to save the economy, but were not given the chance "to send their votes as well," as Arguelles himself said.

The reality is that there is very strong opposition to the bill coming from politicians. Their reasons stem from fears of cheating, and of the "swing vote effect" in favor of particular candidates who woo overseas Filipinos.

Just before the impeachment trial broke loose, the bill was supposed to be presented on second reading by Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales last October. Unfortunately, the lawmakers' attention and debates focused on Estrada's alleged involvement in *jueteng*. In short, the absentee voting bill never got a chance to be deliberated in the halls of Congress.

But these political excuses are not enough for both houses of Congress to shun the bill. However, politicians have used their political powers to do everything they could to stymie the legislative measure.

In the legislative history of the absentee voting bill, the majority lawmakers have successfully "killed" the bill. Every time the bill is filed, it is like saying that another set of papers is ready for the archives of Congress.

But what these people are shelving are the tireless efforts of our Filipino migrants and contract workers to save the country from economic ruin. While government calls these migrants as "modern-day heroes," that euphemism has been supplanted by political maneuvers that have ignored our overseas Filipino workers.

Currently, some groups are employing last-ditch efforts to have the bill passed before the May elections. Last week, the group Global Coalition for the Political Empowerment of Overseas Filipinos (Empower) has launched a global campaign to pass the absentee voting bill in time for May. We can certainly understand why there is a need for OFWs to vote this May. They do not want another Estrada-like administration to happen again.

Filipinos overseas have also staged their own protests during the People Power II Revolution. These were visible in Hong Kong, Australia, the United States, Canada, Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia and some European countries. They came in the form of street rallies and non-remittance campaigns.

They have shown their disgust with a government that is corrupt, ineffective and unresponsive to the needs of the country. To continue their vigilance, their exercise of their right to vote in the coming elections will be the key.

However, people like Arguelles and groups like Empower and other migrant civil society groups working for migrants' welfare must accept the reality: that there is no more chance for absentee voting this May. It is not their fault why this had to happen. Time is too short, the lawmakers have emptied the session halls and only a few politicians seem interested in the bill (or perhaps its speedy passage).

This is not a good sign for the Macapagal administration. The easing out of OFWs from the elections also means the disfranchisement of migrants from governance. Her administration might see protest movements like another non-remittance campaign or street rallies abroad because absentee voting was never given the priority consideration it deserves. What we should also fear is if Filipinos overseas become indifferent and lose interest in the country's welfare and development, in quiet protest against the politicians' continued neglect of their rights as citizens.

People like Arguelles could only hope that absentee voting is given priority by the government, despite its realistically dim chances this coming May. Unfortunately, politicians have "killed" the OFWs' dreams to help rebuild the country through absentee voting.

That "legislative killing spree" must never happen again. If and when the OFWs finally get to vote, they should disregard those who have neglected their plight.

GMA should slow down

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE INQUIRER series on the alleged attempt of Irene and Greggy Araneta to transfer funds from the Union Bank of Switzerland to the Deutsche Bank would appear to vindicate former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, the only guy who had believed in Australian investigator Reiner Jacobi. I could understand the popular skepticism about that story, for indeed the alleged Araneta fortune, $13.4 billion, was mind-boggling and Jacobi enjoys a dubious reputation. Chavez insists that this story is true, though he is no longer sure how much of the money is still around. The last time that figure had allegedly appeared in a document was June of 1998. "I only hope it's not too late," he says.

* * *

PCGG Commissioner Jorge Sarmiento says he hopes to get Chavez's cooperation on this matter, but the latter is not keen on cooperating with the Presidential Commission on Good Government in its present state. This is understandable. After all, the PCGG virtually called him a looney when he talked about this fortune last year. But Chavez recommends that in the reconstituted PCGG under Haydee Yorac, credible lawyers like Alex Padilla, Arno Sanidad and Theodore Pe be drafted to really run after the Marcos fortune. Chavez says that with those lawyers and Yorac as chief, "baby, we will soar." He added that before, people suspected that he was using this story only to get publicity for his senatorial ambition, but now that it's clear he has no political plans, "perhaps, they will now take me seriously."

* * *

That photo of President Macapagal at the recent employment summit in Malacañang was worth more than a thousand words. That summit was supposed to discuss ways of generating more jobs, but obviously the picture looked rather dim from where the chief executive sat. For the first time since she assumed power, she looked a bit dejected, a departure from her usual beaming photos.

It is not surprising, for statistics showed that the unemployment figure went up by 11.4 percent last January, when Ms Macapagal assumed office, the highest in nine months. It was obvious that the political turmoil of the preceding months and the crony capitalism of the Estrada regime had left the economy in a shambles, dampening investor confidence. How to rev it up so that the unemployed poor could get jobs remains the major problem of this administration. Ms Macapagal said she hopes to reduce it to 10 percent immediately, and fortunately, many private firms have committed to refrain from layoffs despite the economic difficulties.

* * *

But certain signals indicate that things are looking up. At last week's Palace dinner for the 10 senators who voted to open the second envelope, business leader Raul Concepcion replied, in answer to my query about the economy, that things are indeed looking better now. He was quite in awe of Ms Macapagal's by now famous addiction to work and her grasp of the economic situation. If you ask me, however, Ms Macapagal should really slow down a bit; that summit photo also showed how much she has lost in weight. It is more important that she stays healthy to be able to tackle the country's most difficult job, especially coming after that one-man wrecking crew, her predecessor.

* * *

In a brief chat, former Ramos Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, now president of the Asian Institute of Management, stressed to me that economic recovery would be anchored on how three things are handled: the budget deficit, which has ballooned to P225 billion in Estrada's time; the "Erap issue," which is "basically unchartered territory," and such extraneous factors as the slowdown of the US and Japanese economies, as well as the burgeoning of China's and India's economies.

This administration is trying to pare down this budget deficit to P145 billion through an austerity program, but I note that this still has to be enforced all around. The repercussions on the certain imprisonment and trial of Estrada remain a source of instability, but haling him to jail is something that has to be done.

Against the prevailing uncertainty, De Ocampo opined that our biggest asset right now is "a highly educated economist President." He added that Ms Macapagal is also the "first baby-boomer President," and thus her generation has a stake in the country's economic recovery.

* * *

From the vantage point of Philippine Economic Zone Authority Director General Lilia de Lima, who's directly in touch with the foreign investors, things are also looking better. De Lima wrote me to point out that the investment inflows in Peza economic zones as approved by the Peza board for the first two months of this year rose by 227 percent over the same period in year 2000—from P3.859 billion to P12.602 billion. She feels "more bullish" this year as a result of the resolution of the political crisis, Ms Macapagal's assumption into office and her choice of a "very competent economic team."

De Lima also noted that this early, there has been a perceptible increase of interest by foreign investors. The most recent group was the 67-member Japanese Investment Survey Mission of Jetro that made the rounds of Japanese information technology, electronics and automotive firms in the various ecozones in the Calabarzon area and Cebu, to find out how they are faring.

* * *

Another indication that we are returning to the investment radar screen, said De Lima, is that foreign consultancy firms have started to gather information about the investment climate here, while the foreign media, notably the Japanese and Koreans, have started to make their own economic assessments through various teams sent here. The Peza chief also stressed that she is optimistic about the IT sector gaining more ground this year (Peza has five proclaimed IT ecozones: three in Metro Manila, one in Cebu City and another coming up in Makati). "Our literate, English-speaking, easy to train, hardworking and very friendly work force will be the most benefited by our pitch for the Philippines to become the IT hub in Asia," she stressed.

* * *

The scourge that is cancer will be the focus of a Fun Run dubbed "K-Run" tomorrow, March 18, organized by the "Kapisanan ng Mga K sa Pilipinas" in order to increase public awareness and concern about this dreaded disease. Distinguished individuals will run or walk for specific cancer patients and survivors, in a gesture of solidarity in the fight against the disease. One of them is James Auste, the young cancer victim who journeyed around the country on a wheelchair to dramatize his and other patients' situation. Auste founded the Cancer Warriors Foundation. They aim to help raise funds for various projects of the Kapisanan, such as information dissemination and various psycho-social activities for victims and their families.

Tomorrow's K-Run starts with a walk around the UP Diliman Academic Oval, with assembly at the Oblation statue at 7 a.m. The runners, led by UP chaplain Fr. Robert Reyes, however, will head for the Quezon Memorial Circle and back to UP, where a Mass will be held at the lagoon at 10 a.m.

Benny Tan and the two Lois

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

BIENVENIDO "Benny" Tan corrupt? Then, so are we all. Then you can kiss goodbye to all good men who would serve government and try, mightily, to clean up its mess and straighten out its convoluted system. Tan joins the distinguished company of Quintin Doromal, Philip Juico, Jose Dans—all good men accused of malfeasance in office while the scoundrels have gone scot-free with nary a scratch for their big-time crimes. What? Pacificador not guilty and Tan guilty? More than ever, that ironic dictum rings in my ears: the courts dispense the law, not justice.

Tan's credentials, integrity and track record are well known and need no repetition. Less known and one of his "smaller" endeavors is his pioneering in the book industry. Bookmark was one of the first, if not the first book company after Liberation with its small store in Regina Building in old Escolta. Who in our generation did not visit that bookstore, savoring the first books after a book-starved Japanese Occupation? In 1962 Bookmark published Philippine Contemporary Literature, my first textbook now on its sixth edition and still going strong. So, am I writing this because of *utang na loob*? Not quite; for Lory Tan knows I've "moved" to Anvil.

It is simply disturbing to see "the wrong fish" as Randy David puts it, caught in a cruel vise like this and I lament with all those who know the Tan family for what they are—honorable, principled and in continual service to the community, from Dr. Angie T. Alora to Sr. Christine Tan. Would that there were more men in government as qualified and as honest as former Ambassador Bienvenido Tan!

For here we are in this campaign season, again deluged with candidates without training, with inadequate educational backgrounds, without even the least bit of apprenticeship; high jumping from the basketball court, from the movies, from plain joblessness, from a political or familial connection; right into Congress or the governor's or mayor's seat.

Drivers, mechanics, watch repairmen not to mention teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc., need training, experience, and a biodata; but not them, not public servants. They just have to be natural born, read-and-write, registered voter, 40 and above. That means any Erap, Vic and Joey. And any Tessie too.

And Loi. There are two faces to Loi. The first one is the Loi emerging from the lumbering shadow of her husband. No one missed the glow on her face when Estrada abandoned Malacañang. She was almost beaming, with a smile that bore no dourness of the past, as if she was being liberated from some load, person or situation, and coming into her own. Ordinarily I would cheer any such liberation, or emergence of one's true self. Loi, the psychiatrist, should know exactly what's happening to her and this is nobody's business but herself's. Any feminist can be generous with such a person.

But Loi has another face, a political face that is very much our business because it is being foisted upon us as a possible public servant. While we cannot judge what's going on inside her psyche, we have to take the candidate Loi, at face value. To this political Loi, we cannot be as generous as to the other. There are many reasons why.

Loi is carrying with her the Erap baggage and entourage. Much as anyone would rather be her own person than somebody's symbol, Loi cannot help but stand for Erap like an alter ego. How true that a vote for Loi is a vote for Erap. That alone is a dangerous possibility that should deter anybody from voting for her.

Not only is she an alter ego; she is fast becoming a clone of her husband. She is being packaged with all the trimmings of the *masa* image, just like Erap. This "First Lady ng Masa," this "Doktora ng Masa" has a favorite line; "helping the poor," rudely interrupted by Edsa II. So, is it now Loi *para sa mahirap*?

On her own though, we must admit that she's learning fast. Either her husband and/or the political muck on the campaign trail has rubbed off on her. She has already mastered the slick retort, "the charge...about our supposed escape is as credible as the claim that the Philippines will have its first submarine soon." And she can already make preposterous claims without batting an eyelash as when she said that the combined administrations of Cory and Ramos cannot equal the accomplishments of her husband, and in only two and a half years at that! Soon, Loi may begin to believe what she says.

And not to forget—Loi has her own cases to deal with: the alleged *jueteng* payoffs from Singson, the political philanthropy exposed by Sr. Christine Tan, dubious non-profit organizations like "The Partnership for the Poor Foundation." Loi-watchers insist that she has enjoyed the perks.

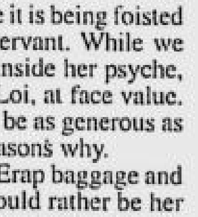
I object finally to yet another politician, another candidate who will practice on us, at our expense, and to our great disadvantage. For shorn of all her trappings good and bad, Loi is just another candidate high-jumping into office with forgettable credentials. For governance, Liway Chato and Winnie Monsod are notches above her.

Asuncion David Maramba is a book editor, a retired professor and an occasional journalist.

Responsible architecture

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



THE PAST 50 years have seen tremendous changes in the urban landscape brought about by a number of factors. An exodus of the rural population, unbridled development, rapid expansion and population explosion have produced alterations in the urban areas not necessarily felicitous.

Archival photographs of Intramuros, the plaza in Binondo or Escolta usually show a streetscape where buildings blend into an overall aesthetic context with civic and religious structures designed to stand out. Some town plazas in the provinces still retain their historical flavor with these important structures dominating the open space shaded by centuries-old acacias. Plazas were considered important public spaces and thus buildings around it were lavishly decorated and harmoniously sited. These uniform structures with individual embellishments gave prestige and status to the settings and beautified the open space they surrounded. Towns and cities thus made sense reflecting the values of the society: the order visible in the landscape reflected the order and harmony perceived as desirable by the society.

It is obvious values have changed and what was once considered ideal has given way to expediency especially of the political kind. If Metro Manila has been described as ugly, much of the blame can be laid on the lack of planning as the urban pattern loosened with expansion. When land values increased, owners tore down older buildings to construct bigger structures, hotels and malls resulting in chaotic vistas with jagged and uneven horizons. Aside from the usual garbage, lack of shade trees and sidewalks and dismally neglected empty lots, the messy urban scene typical of Metro Manila can be further attributed to structures of uneven height that are the norm since standards do not appear to be enforced. The result is an unkempt and visually bleak street appearance. Obviously, neither zoning nor height nor bulk restriction is taken into account.

To add to the city's woes, much of the architectural heritage has been destroyed. Architectural gems like the Jai-Alai Building no less on orders of the mayor and two rare Andres Luna San Pedro houses on the boulevard bit the dust. Historical spaces such as Manila Bay, Roxas Boulevard and the Mehan Garden are disappearing. Will Manila be remade in the image of Ramos, Atienza and Banayo without a sense of place and history?

The worst might still be coming since works by Leandro Locsin, national artist, are due for demolition. True, lip service is paid to preserve the built heritage but the reality is that much has already been destroyed. No doubt it is an expensive legacy to maintain especially if no use can be found for it. But the citizenry has yet to hear clear statements from the government of the role of these structures in the overall urban context, their importance with respect to urban planning and the inspiration these may have for architectural ideas for a better city.

Has the clutter and chaos of the loosening urban fabric taught developers anything at all? Doesn't a cityscape of adjacent structures that are dissimilar in size and style bother the aesthetics of architects and urban planners? Ideally, practicing architects should draw inspiration from their heritage, but this is rather difficult if the government adopts a laissez-faire attitude toward development. Without inspiration from the past, designs that blossom will hardly express Filipino culture. It might have been interesting had a major area of Binondo been preserved, existing side by side with American period architecture to see what could have evolved. Instead, we have modern generic buildings, chain restaurants and malls, skyways and highways and "soul-less dormitory suburbs" obliterating a sense of place.

Few architects are visionary enough to graft on new structures to existing ones such as in Ninit Paterno's Orchid Garden Suite in Vito Cruz where the new hotel rises behind her ancestral home. This was a much more creative solution than Lucio Tan's Vietnamese Embassy where the original Art Deco house was torn down and replaced with a non-entity.

Most people are aware that the government and architects will soon be dealing with megalopolises but there appears to be little consideration that these urban projects should integrate respect for historic districts while providing solutions to the demands of modern life. With all these talk of recycling and zero-waste, shouldn't this translate into a consideration of the urban ecology? Shouldn't the approach be recovery rather than taking up more land?

No matter what one builds, whether a small project or a massive one, it always has an impact on the city and affects the citizenry. Urban planning should be the concern of anyone planning an intervention and shouldn't be considered the responsibility of the government alone. If architects and developers are still unaware that we are dealing with limited resources and rural encroachment, of limited space and pollution, of losing a heritage, the long term results can only be appalling.

* * *

Comments are welcome at bambiharper@hotmail.com

Me, father and the economy

YOUNGBLOOD

Lovelei P. Labayog

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE HARSH reality of existence seeps into our consciousness as we travel along in our everyday routines. We see countless children wandering in the streets either begging or selling all kinds of cheap merchandise risking life and limb in the maze of traffic. More and more people scour garbage dumps for something of value just to tide them over for another meal. There is a progressive increase in the number of women joining the horde of prostitutes for a fast buck or lining up to apply for work as maids or entertainers abroad notwithstanding the indignities they may suffer just to combat poverty. We read or hear stories of companies folding up or factories downsizing operations and retrenching workers. Indeed, the economy going on a slump was just one more provocation for People Power II. The people, especially the youth, have realized the real cause of it all—the ineptness of the Estrada administration.

I am just one of many people affected by the economic slump, but it is only lately that I learned the reason why.

My economic woes started when I entered college in 1998, coincidentally the start of the Estrada presidency. I was greatly disappointed not only because my parents did not send me to the same exclusive school where my elder sister got her degree but also due to my father's failure to buy the new computer and printer he promised as a gift for my high school graduation. I still remember the rebellion I felt within and the tinge of jealousy against my elder brother and sister who each had their own computer (which I declined to use because they were already outmoded). I was mollified by my father's promise to buy one before the year ends (I am about to finish my third year in college but the computer has yet to come. I feel greatly handicapped but I overcame this by using my friend's computer and frequenting computer outlets with my meager allowance).

The rebellious feelings grew because I was not even accorded similar amenities my brother and sister enjoyed in their time. I was like a nerd unable to go out on a "gimmick" with my friends but I could not discuss this at length with my father because he was away most of the time as a contractor of government projects in the Visayas.

I prided myself and took solace in saying that my rebellious feelings triggered a positive outlook in life. My father's apathy or indifference to his youngest offspring (that's me) pricked my ego but instead of self-destructing, I struggled to work and study hard. As in reverse psychology, I wanted to show my father that I could get high grades even without his full support and that would be as good as dousing him with cold water.

It was perfect timing when my grades arrived. My father was in the sala watching the impeachment proceedings. I gave him the honor of opening the envelope. I waited for some reactions as he looked at my grade sheet and other than a slight glimmer in his eyes, he showed no trace of emotion. He was poker-faced as he handed back the my grade sheet.

I was disgusted by the indifference of my father but did his silence reflect his guilt and awakening to my suppressed unhappiness?

The answer came the following night while we were viewing the culmination of the impeachment trial. He called me to his study and expressed his elation over my grades then asked me to apply for a scholarship. Even I myself was surprised when I blurted out a loud no! Then I started crying. I was shaking uncontrollably as I opened up and recounted the litany of my ordeals and complaints. I reminded him how I squeezed myself into fully packed jeepneys and buses from day one in school unlike my brother who drove a car and my sister who was driven by the family driver to school. I told him outright that I did not strive for good grades to provide him the luxury of not paying my tuition.

He was visibly pained but displayed his usual self-restraint. He soothingly told me that life has its ups and downs and said it was unfortunate that my time in college came during a down cycle. Then he handed me an envelope which he urged me to read as he excused himself to retire for the night.

Among others, the envelope contained newspaper clippings written by my father and published mostly in the opinion section of the INQUIRER. One discussed the exorbitant interest rates imposed by the banks which was killing the construction industry. Other articles were mainly focused on the government's inability to pay the contractors for projects that were already completed which created a domino effect on commerce and unemployment. Another was an open letter to President Estrada exhorting an emotional appeal for payment of completed contracts which seemed unheeded because the succeeding articles made mention of contractors going on strike and forcibly suspending infrastructure contracts.

It took me an hour to read all the documents. It was like solving a jigsaw puzzle and when the last piece was put in place I had gained a clearer perspective of the situation. My father put up his own construction firm after his optional retirement from the government in 1995. In 1997 he diversified and acquired additional construction equipment through financing. In 1998 he started to default in the amortization of the equipment. One reply to his series of letters to the Department of Public Works and Highways explained it all: "his works would be paid as soon as funds become available." By the time the government finally started paying, the debts have meteorically piled through compounded interests, penalties and surcharges and the equipment were either seized or sold at bargain prices. I learned that even his retirement pay went down the drain.

There were three documents in the envelope that particularly struck my attention. One was an unfinished article that I surmised was intended for publication. It generously supported the "I Accuse" speech of then Senate Minority Leader Teofisto Guingona whom he lavishly praised for his bravery and statesmanship in calling for the resignation of Estrada. His letter fully endorsed the call as he expounded the issues of cronyism, corruption, abuse of power, etc. that made the government bankrupt. Another was a clipping from a provincial tabloid which told the story of a contractor jumping from a high-rise unfinished building in Cebu, ending it all when the banks started confiscating his equipment. The third was a newly drafted letter addressed to the Department of Justice appealing payment to the newly constructed MCTC Building in Bohol. As gleaned in the letter, the building was completed last August 2000 and is now being used to dispense justice. The injustice lies in the fact that my father has not yet been paid a single centavo for this job well done and fully accepted by the recipients. I also found his travel papers which indicated that he wanted to work abroad. Apparently, he plans to leave after the collection of his claims at the DOJ. So he is leaving me again. All my life he has been away most of the time in the remote areas of Bicol, in the outskirts of the Visayas and in far-flung Mindanao. This time to en even farther land.

Unwarily, tears were already streaming down my cheeks as I grabbed my cell phone and started texting my friends. The economy must be revived. The main cause of its plunge must be uprooted. And I must be involved.

Lovelei P. Labayog, 19, is a third year AB Communication Arts student at the University of Santo Tomas.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

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Why pick on Tancangco alone?

I READ your editorial of March 4 claiming that I have become a "walking cliché: a prosecutor, judge and executioner rolled into one."

For whatever it is worth, I strongly request the publication of this response for the people to be informed of my side on the National Movement for Free Elections' accreditation issue.

Let it be stressed that I voted for the Namfrel's accreditation as a citizens' arm but not for the outright grant of authority for the Namfrel to conduct a quick count.

It is true that the results of my past studies have been the bases of the many reforms I am trying to espouse at the Commission on Elections. Included in the package of reforms is the clarification of vague criteria in the selection of citizens' arm and fine-tuning of the flaws in the procedures which I saw in the past. If learning from the lessons of the past would make one an accuser, then so be it. If asking clarificatory questions can be considered as accusations, then let it be.

The Comelec is a collegial body. There are five commissioners and it was not I alone who voted for the deferment of the Namfrel's authority to do a quick count. We all want to have our procedural and accountability questions fully answered and evidence presented before making a final decision. What is due process and where is fairness if this will not be observed? Knowledge of the nitty-gritty of the procedures will make the deliberation more balanced and instructive for this collegial body to arrive at a fair and impartial decision. Out of the seven commissioners, only two voted to accredit the Namfrel as a citizens' arm to conduct a quick count. Five commissioners voted for the clarification of criteria and procedures Why pick on me alone?

It is basic that for any responsibility, there is commensurate accountability. Thus, anyone who seeks accreditation to undertake such a sensitive function or responsibility such as counting of votes must assume an accompanying accountability. If Comelec officials can either be impeached or charged for releasing an inaccurate vote count, then what would be the nature and form of accountability that a citizens' arm should assume in the conduct of an unofficial count? Whether official or unofficial, the counting of votes should adhere to the principles of transparency, verifiability and accuracy. This is very important because our people do not often make a distinction between official and unofficial counts. Since the unofficial count is disseminated ahead of the official count, any discrepancy will always be a source of confusion and charges of trending and fraud. And, any distortion of the vote-count, be it official or unofficial, should carry with it certain sanctions to ensure public accountability not only to Comelec officials but also to civil society.

If these issues are not raised, it does not necessarily mean that the same do not exist. Your kind attention is invited to this stark reality.

The Namfrel is given its day in court in all the hearings and proceedings before the Comelec, and the role of the media in ferreting out the truth to promote political autonomy is recognized.

In a democracy, due process dictates that the Namfrel's side should be heard. The Namfrel has to confront squarely the problems identified and demonstrate clearly the procedures it adopts in the conduct of a quick count.

During the process, objectivity is best served by dispassionate discussion rather than media sensationalism. At the rate Namfrel leaders have been touring radio and television stations spreading disinformation and half-truths and even going to the extent of threatening me with impeachment, this eminded me of Danilo Zolo's critique of Joseph Schumpter's theory which says: The freedom of speech and free competition for a free vote form the essence of democracy. However, as Zolo pointed out, where the political and economic oligarchies own the mass media and make use of propagandist techniques, they wanted "to create the will of the people." Instead of nurturing critical faculties of the recipients of the political products they are selling, their mere assertions, when often repeated, appealed to emotions instead of promoting rational argumentation.

The particular slant (*angulo* in local press parlance) of presenting the issues to the public hides the bias and vested interests of the groups behind the misleading information and propaganda materials. All this can amount to mass deception. This awareness should alert us to the possibility of citizens' political manipulation as a by-product of propagandist techniques.

With the above in mind, let me end this with an appeal for reason. My earnest plea is for the media to observe balance in their presentation of the issues so as not to compromise the autonomy of commissioners in deciding cases on the basis of merit and, in the end, the sovereignty of political consumers or the voting public including the candidates who are the direct stakeholders in electoral competitions.—**LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO, commissioner, Commission on Elections, Intramuros, Manila**

LETTERS

Water, power and toll price hikes

POLITICAL wannabes who are organizing people to go against the proposed toll increase being requested by the Philippine National Construction Corp. and Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. for the South Expressway from Magallanes to Alabang should also do so against the proposed rate hikes for water and electricity.

More than the expressway tolls, increase in water and electrical rates affects all of us. It is almost unbearable to live a day without water and electricity but not all of us use the expressways. Besides, motorists have alternate and service roads leading to particular destinations if they do not want or cannot afford to pay expressway toll fees.

With water and electricity, especially water, we have no choice. In fact, residents of Parañaque like me have long been deprived of a good supply of water. For many years, our water supply has been rationed. When I saw the water concessionaire starting its pipe-installing activity in our subdivision, I thought finally I would have a continuous and more convenient supply of clean water. But even before completing the pipe-installation work, we are threatened with water rate increases or we would have no water at all. More than anything else, this is what the people aspiring for political office should make an issue of.—**NENITA V. MARIANO, 107 Doña Soledad Ave., Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque City**

Pagcor, PCSO heads underwent selection

THIS is in connection with the column of Conrado R. Banal III, where he said that the papers of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. president Efraim C. Genuino and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office general manager Virgilio Angelo were "recycled from the wastebasket and then sent back to her (President Macapagal's) desk for signature."

For the record, Genuino and Angelo were recommended by the Search Committee solely on the basis of their work experience, personal integrity, competence and honesty.

Angelo was head for 22 years of the Citytrust Banking Corp.'s corporate banking group. He retained this position when the CBC was merged with the Bank of the Philippine Islands. He also managed the stock brokerage arm of the BPI. He was likewise president and director of the BPI Securities Corp. He retired in May 2000 but remained as consultant until December last year.

Genuino is a successful businessman who managed and owned several companies. He is also head of the Trace Computer College, one of the country's largest.

There is no doubt that Angelo and Genuino went through the rigid selection process before being appointed to the sensitive positions they now occupy.

Like all other appointees of the President, Angelo and Genuino are expected to serve with the highest standards of excellence, integrity, diligence and honesty expected of them by the Filipino people.—**BOBBY CAPCO, press undersecretary, Office of the Press Secretary, Malacañang, Manila**

Chinese Nobel winner welcomed everywhere but home

FEATURE

Scott Hillis

SEATTLE—Ever since he won last year's Nobel Prize for literature, Gao Xingjian has had the world at his feet. Germany, Japan and the United States have all rolled out the red carpet for the 61-year-old author.

But there is still one place off limits to the first Chinese writer to win a Nobel literature award in the 99-year history of the prize: his homeland, China.

The soft-spoken Gao, who left China for France in 1987 and went into permanent exile after the bloody June 4, 1989, crackdown on student-led protests in Beijing, said he does not foresee being able to return soon to communist-ruled China, where he is blacklisted and his works are banned.

"I can't see a timetable for them openly approving of my works," Gao told Reuters in an interview while in Seattle to promote his award-winning book, "Soul Mountain," a flowery account of a man's journey through China's heartland where he tries to reconcile individuality with the demands of society.

Acknowledging that China's current crop of leaders is more worldly and modern than preceding ones, Gao says they still deeply mistrust free-spirited artistic works such as his, even though they contain no overt political messages.

"They are different, but of course their attitude toward my work is the same. They cannot accept an independent spirit."

While many Chinese swelled with pride at Gao's historic Nobel accomplishment and he was feted as a hero in Taiwan, the democratic island that Beijing views as a breakaway province, Gao said his award should not have nationalistic implications.

"The Nobel is given to a person, not to a country," he said. "My hope is that I don't become a symbol of anything. I'm just a writer."

Gao seems wary of picking political fights, answering a question about whether he thought Beijing should win its bid to host the 2008 Summer Olympics by saying: "That is best left to the Olympic Committee."

Born in China's eastern province of Jiangxi in 1940, Gao started writing at 8, when his mother, educated by Christian missionaries, urged him to keep a diary. She also exposed him to Western literature such as John Steinbeck and Honore De Balzac, while his father avidly read classic Chinese works.

Despite an affinity for physics, Gao decided the arts were more to his liking and entered a Beijing language school where he mastered French, graduating in 1962.

During Mao Zedong's 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution, which aimed to destroy China's "feudal" cultural legacy and start anew with communist-inspired works, Gao lived a double life. By day he worked at his government job translating communist propaganda into French. At night, his imagination roamed free as he penned plays, poems and stories whose discovery would likely have earned him not praise but years in a labor camp.

"I translated propaganda, things praising Chairman Mao. But I was secretly working on my own writings," Gao said. "It would have surely been dangerous if they had been discovered."

Fearing for his life, he eventually burned all the manuscripts, some 30 kg of them.

Gao visited France in the 1960s as part of his official duties, but his easy acceptance of the country and its people earned him the suspicious scrutiny of colleagues.

"At work I always read French periodicals like Le Monde, so I wasn't too surprised at the Western lifestyle," he said. "But I was too accustomed, so I was written up in a report. I would talk freely to foreigners and that was suspicious."

After Mao's death in 1976, Gao returned to writing openly. A defining event occurred in 1983 when doctors told him he had lung cancer. Just weeks later the tumor mysteriously vanished.

Gao disappeared, too, into the forests of southwest China and the communities along the Yangtze River. The six-month, 15,000-km odyssey formed the basis for "Soul Mountain," which was published in Chinese in 1990 but went little noticed outside of Chinese literary circles.

"It is a skeptical view of Chinese history. I am interested in the origins of Chinese culture. It is also questioning myself and is questioning whether language has the ability to fully reflect human emotions," Gao said of the 506-page work.

After the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, Gao renounced his party membership. He became a French citizen in 1998. "I decided to be an exile and not go back," he said.

The Nobel award has turned his once-quiet life upside-down. It brought a $900,00 cash prize and a flood of requests for speaking and book signing engagements from more than 60 countries.

"I never thought I would be a best-selling author. Before, it was just a small circle of writers who knew me. Now, that has turned into a huge group of people who are aware of my work," Gao mused.

"It is like having a new life. It is difficult to find quiet time. I am always traveling, giving interviews. But it is necessary."

He says he has no time to read the newspapers, much less write new novels, but a new work coming out soon, called "One Man's Bible," deals directly with political themes. Humanity is starting the new millennium with a quest to rediscover individual values after a century of debilitating strife and wealth-spinning globalization, he said.

"Individuals need their own values. The commoditization of everything today is destroying individual values, so affirming those values and avoiding commoditization of the individual is important today," Gao said.

"We just finished the 20th century, in which we had revolutions and wars, all inspired by the search for a utopia. There's no longer this belief by people in a utopian vision, and that's a good thing."

Reuters

We cannot have Santiago in a UN court

VIEW with great apprehension nd dismay the latest instruction of resident Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo o the Department of Foreign ffairs for it to continue cam-aigning for the candidacy of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago for a seat n a special United Nations court ased in the Netherlands. Are we eally dumb or just insane? It is as f People Power II never happened t all.

How can Yugoslavians expect airness from this flagrantly opinonated and judgmental person when she, in trying her darndest best to suppress presentation of vital evidence in a trial where she sat both as judge and legislator, in effect betrayed her own people? How can there be justice from her who, far from heeding the verdict of the greater majority of decent Filipinos, continues to champion the interest of thieves and plunderers?

The other dishonorable, irrelevant and immaterial senators belonging to the Craven Eleven have likewise begun to slither out of their crawlspaces, still their pontificating, offensive and oppressive selves. These people have so asserted their political positions, social connections and economic stations that their names are now despised more than any other names in this blighted country of ours.

What is wrong with us? Do we rid our house of vermin by simply driving them into a corner? Will we humor a gangrenous foot by pretending it isn't there? When a robber is apprehended, do we simply let him go, loot and all? Shouldn't we exterminate in the first instance, excise in the second and confiscate and jail in the third?

Pardon may only be given to those who truly seek forgiveness. Rewarding our unrepentant tormentors bastardizes the true spirit of crime and punishment and mocks the collective outrage and indignation that Edsa Dos was.

We must resist, at all costs, being represented in any international forum by morally flawed, tainted and compromised Filipinos because this will utterly destroy, in the eyes of the world, the last vestige of credibility we will ever again hope to attain as a nation.—**ANTONIO CALIPJO GO, 199 Sauyo Road, Novaliches, Quezon City**

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Fabricated story

THIS is with reference to an article titled, "Jinggoy's aid won't help Ipe win, says Mayor Abalos" that appeared in the Feb. 24 issue of the INQUIRER's Metro section.

Recognizing the INQUIRER's "balanced news, fearless views" approach in reportage, allow me to categorically deny the statements attributed to me in the news story. In particular the portion allegedly quoting me saying, "Abalos however said that Salvador, like deposed President Joseph Estrada, had children with mistresses, and this might pose serious problems if he would be elected..."

Taking the whole context of the said article, I would like to reiterate that I was never interviewed on this matter. In my whole political career, I have never criticized or raised black propaganda against my opponents. It is not my character to meddle in other people's personal affairs and private lives. The issue here is all about an individual's qualifications and capacity to serve.

I hope I have made myself clear as I deem it so unfair to be tagged as the source of a patently fabricated story.—**BENHUR ABALOS, mayor, Mandaluyong City**

Erratum

IN THE EIGHTH paragraph of Belinda A. Aquino's commentary last Wednesday, March 14, titled "Saving a cultural icon," the word "secretarianism" should have read "sectarianism." We regret the error.–**Ed.**

Standing by the Ombudsman

GRAFT and corruption is most difficult to uproot. Its pervasiveness in our society is the biggest stumbling block to national security and prosperity.

In People Power I and II, we amply demonstrated our outrage against corrupt and despotic leaders. We seek to install a new moral order. We expect no less than efficient and effective government and public servants.

We therefore appreciate the vigilance and earnestness of the Ombudsman in investigating former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada for plunder and other high crimes. As Section 12, Article XI of the Constitution states, "The Ombudsman and his Deputies, as protectors of the people, shall act promptly on complaints filed in any form or manner against public officials or employees of the government."

We therefore appreciate the Supreme Court's apparent desire to preserve national security and unity by quickly rendering its verdict on the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency and stripping Estrada of immunity. But we call on the Supreme Court to lift the gag order and temporary restraining order on the Ombudsman so that it can perform its mission for the Filipino people.

We call on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to respect the Constitution by:

- Abandoning any plan to set up a presidential commission to investigate the crimes of ousted President Joseph Estrada since this is the work of the Ombudsman.
- Abolishing the toothless Presidential Commission Against Graft and Corruption, as it only duplicates the work of the Ombudsman.

Finally, we call on the President and Congress to strengthen the Office of the Ombudsman by increasing its personnel and budget.

As civil society partners of the Office of the Ombudsman, the members of the Bantay Bayan Foundation, proclaim that it is our duty to assist the Ombudsman in the fight against graft and corruption. We commit our organization to stand by the Ombudsman and to promote an atmosphere conducive to the performance of its constitutional mandate.—**WILLY B. CALMA, MNSA, president, Bantay Bayan Foundation, 129-D. Gen. Pio Valenzuela St., Caloocan City**

The **WORLD**
MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

Hijackers land plane in Saudi Arabia, release 46 hostages

AL-KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia—Saudi security forces took positions around a hijacked Russian plane as negotiations yesterday resumed to end a standoff with Chechen men who forced the aircraft carrying 174 people to land in the holy Saudi city of Medina from Turkey. Hours later, 46 hostages were freed or escaped.

After talks broke down for hours, Saudi authorities resumed negotiations with the hijackers, the official Saudi Press Agency reported. The hijackers were armed with knives and claimed to have a bomb.

After landing, security forces surrounded the aircraft, said Abdul Fatah Mohammad Atta, the Medina airport manager. But a Saudi security official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was no intention of raiding the plane.

Reports on the number of hijackers, identified as Chechens, varied from two to four.

It wasn't clear what the hijackers wanted. Saudi officials said they had had earlier asked to fly to Afghanistan. Russian Embassy official Igor Kremnev told Russia's NTV television that the hijackers' demands were unclear.

An official at Medina airport, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the hijackers had earlier asked authorities to refuel the plane and prepare it for a long flight but later changed their minds. He did not say where the hijackers were planning to leave to.

The hijacking began 30 minutes after the plane, a Tu-154 from Vnukovo Airlines, took off Thursday from Istanbul's Ataturk International airport en route to Moscow, with 162 passengers and 12 crew members on board.

The hijackers identified themselves as rebels from the breakaway Russian republic of Chechnya, officials said.

But the official Chechen website said Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov denied that his government was responsible.

"The seizure of hostages and blackmail are not our methods of leading battle," the Chechen representative office in Turkey was quoted as saying.

At one point during the flight, a fight between the hijackers and a passenger at the entrance to the cockpit sent the plane on a terrifying plunge of 400 meters, Turkish Transport Minister Enis Oksuz said. He said the pilot managed to stabilize the plane. *AP*

TURKISH passenger Ismail Usta, who is working as a car repairman in Moscow, is relieved after he found out that the flight he has missed was the hijacked Russian plane now in Saudi Arabia. REUTERS

Fiji gets another new premier

SUVA—Fiji's president yesterday appointed a new caretaker prime minister Friday who immediately pledged to hold democratic elections to restore the Pacific nation to constitutional rule for the first time since a nationalist coup in May.

Speaking after his swearing-in by President Ratu Josefa Iloilo, Laisenia Qarase—who had been the country's interim prime minister until Wednesday—said elections were less than six months away.

"Our plan is to hold the general elections in August this year," he said.

Qarase then announced he would stand in the elections for a seat in Parliament. Qarase was a career civil servant before the Army installed him as interim prime minister after the May 19 coup.

The Fiji Court of Appeal ruled Qarase's interim government unlawful early this month, triggering complex political maneuvering by the country's influential tribal chiefs to restore it to power.

Qarase, who resigned his post as interim premier on Wednesday, said he would name a similar Cabinet to his previous administration later Friday.

His previous lineup included just one Indian in a junior ministerial post. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

FMD reported in UAE

ABU DHABI—Forty-five cattle have been destroyed in the United Arab Emirates and another 76 cases of foot-and-mouth disease have been reported so far, newspapers said yesterday. The figures represented a leap from 22 cases reported the day before and followed assurances from agriculture ministry officials that the disease had been stamped out. The outbreak centers on three private farms in the Al-Hair region near the town of El Ain where 22 cows and 23 goats have been killed and 51 other cows and 24 sheep are infected, the Abu Dhabi government daily Al-Ittihad said. "The disease is spreading all the time," read the headline to the story, which said strict controls, had been put in place and the movement of animals halted around Al-Ain, part of Abu Dhabi emirate. *AFP*

Rebels step up campaign

MEXICO CITY—Insurgent Zapatista leader "Subcomandante Marcos" on Thursday stepped up his campaign for an indigenous rights law, advertising his intention to address the European Parliament if he cannot speak before the Mexican Congress. His request to address the Mexican Congress, which on Thursday inaugurated a regular session partly devoted to debate of the bill, touched off a firestorm of controversy. "If the Mexican parliament does not want to hear us, maybe the European Parliament will," Marcos said at a news conference after meeting Sami Nair, a French deputy of the European Parliament. *AFP*

Wahid sacks minister

JAKARTA—Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid has dismissed a minister from one of the parties involved in an attempt to oust him from power over a corruption scandal. Forestry Minister Nurmahmudi Ismail, a member of the Justice Party, was sacked on Thursday, Defense Minister Muhammad Mahfud told journalists at the presidential palace. Mahfud said Wahid would officially announce the dismissal later Friday on his return to Jakarta from a trip to Lampung, South Sumatra. The Justice Party (PK) is one of a group of Muslim parties that supported Wahid's election as president in October 1999 but later turned against him. *AFP*

Illegal migrants drown

POINTE-A-PITRE, Guadeloupe—At least 17 people drowned and 23 were missing in the Caribbean Sea Thursday after a boat carrying more than 40 people including illegal immigrants from the Dominican Republic sank off the island of St. Martin, French police and officials said. Two survivors, a young man and a young woman, who were rescued from the sea by fishermen have been hospitalized on the Franco-Dutch island for shock, official sources said. The boat is thought to have sunk overnight six nautical miles (11 km) southwest of the island. One of the bodies found was wearing a watch, which had stopped at 11:15 a.m., a witness said. *AFP*

China blast kills 18

BEIJING—A series of explosions ripped through residential buildings in northern China yesterday, killing at least 18 people, the government's Xinhua News Agency said. In a brief report, Xinhua said "major explosions" rocked living quarters in the No. 3 Cotton Mill and other spots of Shijiazhuang city at 5 a.m. Friday morning. *AP*

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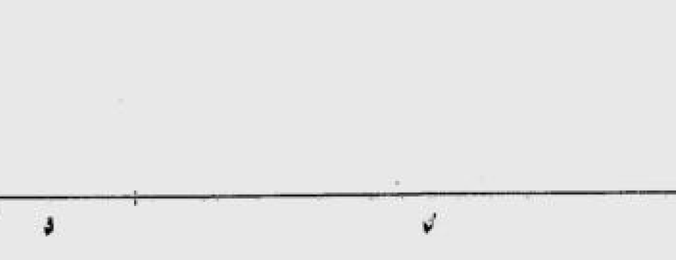

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OPPOSITION lawmakers chant "This is a government of thieves," outside the parliament building in New Delhi, March 16. India's parliament was adjourned yesterday without transacting any business after opposition deputies demanded that the government resign following allegations of corruption in an arms deal.
REUTERS

INDIA IN TURMOIL

Gov't officials call each other 'thieves'

NEW DELHI—Government and opposition lawmakers yesterday called each other thieves, forcing Parliament to adjourn for the fourth day and preventing an address by the prime minister on a bribery scandal that brought the resignation of two Cabinet ministers.

The two sides continued screaming at each other, coming close to blows outside the main gate of Parliament as police forces gathered near a statue of Indian independence leader Mohandas K. Gandhi.

The Indian government has been in turmoil since Tuesday, when an Internet media company released tapes of political, military and defense ministry officials receiving money and discussing bribes with journalists posing as defense contractors.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has tried for three days to address Parliament on the scandal, but opposition lawmakers have stood before the Speaker's chair, shouting slogans to force adjournment.

After the resignation Thursday night of Defense Minister George Fernandes, who said the allegations against him were false and designed to undermine national security, the opposition has said it will press for the entire government to resign.

Fernandes did not appear on any tape released by Tehelka.com, the media company. But the president of his Samata Party, Jaiya Jaitley, was shown in his home, talking to the fake dealers about getting approval for their products, as money was handed over for a party conference.

The defense ministry on Wednesday had fired a major general and three other officials shown accepting money from the phony arms dealers.

Also on Thursday, Railways Minister Mamata Banerjee resigned from the Cabinet and withdrew her party from the governing coalition, saying she was taking a stand against corruption. *AP*

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Highly contagious FMD difficult but not impossible to keep out

]NEW YORK—The virus that carries foot-and-mouth disease is so infectious that it could slip past defenses meant to keep it out of the United States, experts say.

Last year in Japan, where foot-and-mouth disease had not been seen since 1908, the virus arrived on straw imported from China. An outbreak in South Africa began when a farmer picked up garbage from a tramp steamer anchored offshore and fed it to his pigs. The current British outbreak is thought to have begun in a similar way.

The foot-and-mouth virus could enter the United States on plant matter, in the luggage of travelers returning from abroad or even on the soles of their shoes. It's not dangerous to humans but is highly dangerous to many farm animals. Once established in the United States, it could probably be eradicated, but only after causing great economic damage.

"Foot-and-mouth is probably the most communicable disease in the world, period," said Max Coats, deputy director for animal health programs at the Texas Animal Health Commission.

Most viruses can spread only through fairly close contact, such as coughs or sneezes. But foot-and-mouth can hitch a ride on shoes, clothing or vehicles. Wind can carry it dozens or hundreds of miles.

Because the disease is so devastating to farmers, countries go to great lengths to keep it out.

"The occurrence of even a single case of foot-and-mouth disease in a previously disease-free country results in an immediate ban on an economically valuable export trade," the British Medical Journal noted in an editorial this month.

The US Department of Agriculture's greatest fear is that a tourist returning from abroad will introduce foot-and-mouth disease to the United States by bringing home meat, unpasteurized dairy products or other food tainted with the virus. During a recent informal study in the Miami airport, Coats said, officials intercepted a half-metric ton of contraband food products in one hour.

Alternatively, hikers might transport foot-and-mouth disease from Yorkshire to New York on their boots. Authorities are so concerned that people who have recently visited the British countryside are being asked to disinfect their shoes before entering the United States.

Vaccines are available, but farmers are loath to use them. Like the annual flu shot for humans, they have to be tailored to a particular strain of the virus. And it is impossible to distinguish an inoculated animal from an infected one, because the vaccine produces the same immunological response as the disease. So the mere act of vaccinating a single cow or pig against foot-and-mouth disease can jeopardize a nation's meat and livestock exports. *AP*

20-YEAR-RITUAL REUTERS

A Thai Buddhist monk walks among the skulls of hundreds of human skulls exhumed from a cemetery in Chacheonsao, Thailand, March 14, in a ritual performed every 20 years to free cemeteries for burial space.

US begins withdrawal of troops from Bosnia

WASHINGTON—The United States has begun a withdrawal of hundreds of US troops, Apache attack helicopters and heavy armor from Bosnia, the Pentagon said Tuesday, marking the first significant reduction of US forces in the Balkans under the new administration.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States was preparing to withdraw "several hundred troops who are no longer needed."

"So we're starting to draw down, consistent with our mission and consistent with our obligations, having gone in as part of a great alliance, coming out as a part of a great alliance," he said in testimony before the House Budget Committee.

The drawdown comes as the United States and its Nato allies have begun discussing options for phasing out the six-year-old Nato-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and eventually replacing it with a smaller monitoring force, Pentagon and administration officials said.

No cuts are planned of the 5,600 US troops in neighboring Kosovo, the focus of flaring border fighting despite the presence of a 38,000-strong Nato-led peacekeeping force.

Rear Admiral Craig Quigley, a senior Pentagon spokesperson, said all 16 US AH-64 Apache helicopters in Bosnia were being pulled out of Bosnia along with some Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles.

The total US forces in Bosnia will be reduced to 3,500 from some 4,400 when a rotation that began two days ago is completed in early April, Quigley said.

Quigley said the withdrawal resulted from a Nato force review completed in December, but other Pentagon officials said the new administration made the decision to pull out the troops, which were in excess of Nato requirements.

US Ambassador to Nato Sandy Vershbow briefed the allies Feb. 21 on the US intention to proceed with the cut back, Lt. Col. Paul Phillips said.

Meanwhile, a "blueprint for the way ahead" has been circulating within the US government and among the allies on how to go about phasing out SFOR, said a Pentagon official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. *AFP*

PLO, Israelis clash over UN observer force

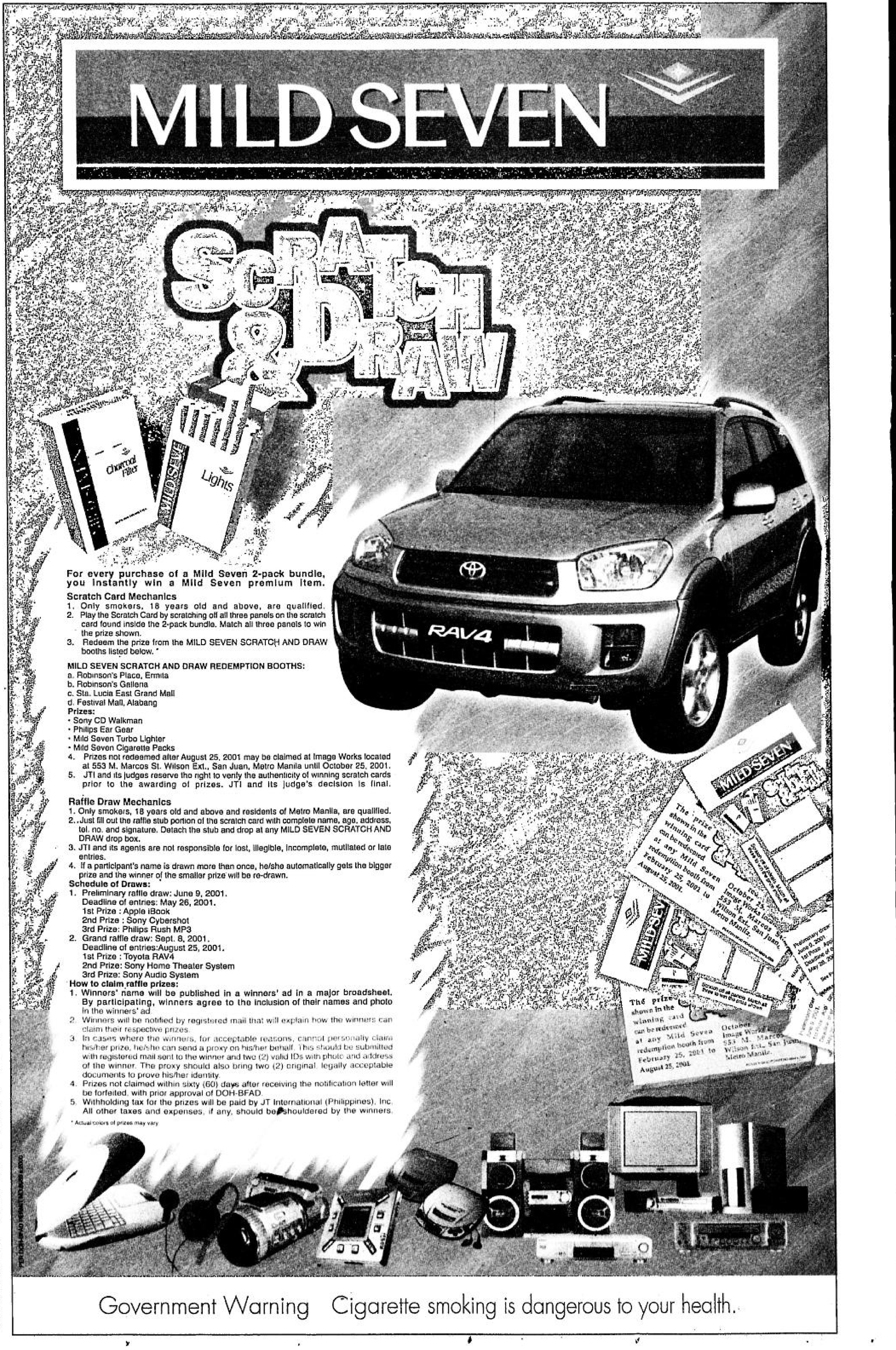
UNITED NATIONS—The Palestinians and Israelis clashed in the Security Council over the Palestinian demand for a UN observer force, which side is responsible for the current violence, and prospects for reviving the badly battered peace process.

Accusing Israel of escalating its "blood-letting military campaign," the Palestinian UN envoy, Nasser Al-Kidwa, urged the council on Thursday to approve an observer force to help the two sides "stop the current tragedy . . . as a prelude to breathing new life into the peace process."

Israel's. UN Ambassador Yehuda Lancry countered that the Palestinians are encouraging the violence "for political gain" and warned that an international force instead of calming tensions could escalate violence and create long-term instability in the region.

The council's open debate followed private meetings Wednesday with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Al-Kidwa on the Palestinian request for the council to reconsider a UN force to help protect Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The council defeated a resolution to authorize a force in December after an intense US campaign—and acting US ambassador James Cunningham told the council Thursday that "the US remains firmly committed to ensuring that the council does not adopt any resolution that is not supported by both the Palestinians and the Israelis." *AP*



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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Erap should be jailed, says Joker

'That is what the law says,' senatorial candidate argues

TARLAC CITY—If an innocent man like former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. suffered eight years in jail because of trumped-up charges, then why not a deposed president facing plunder charges in court?

Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, a senatorial candidate of the People Power Coalition, posed this question in arguing that disgraced President Joseph Estrada would have no reason to grumble about being sent to prison after plunder charges are filed against him.

"That is what the law says," Arroyo said.

Besides, he said, when strongman Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1971, he had then Senator Aquino immediately arrested and imprisoned even without formal charges.

It was only on Aug. 27, 1973 when Aquino was arraigned for murder, illegal possession of firearms and subversion before a military tribunal.

"I can still remember, it was 1972 when Ninoy was ordered jailed. I acted as one of his lawyers. He was jailed, *incommunicado*, only Cory and their children were allowed to visit him. The application of the law on Ninoy went overboard," Arroyo said in Filipino.

Marcos applied "more than the full force of the law," he said.

"He was jailed pending trial. *Si* Erap *hindi siya makakapagreklamo* (Erap should not complain). *Ginawa kay* Ninoy *ni* Marcos; *ginawa* before conviction. If that is the law, then we should apply the full force of the law," he said.

Aquino's eight-year imprisonment by the martial law regime ended in 1980 when Marcos allowed him to leave the country for a triple heart bypass in the United States.

Arroyo, who spoke during the "Piso Para Sa Katarungan" fund-raising campaign of the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa) and the Pi Sigma Fraternity Alumni Association Inc. here on Wednesday, said the only thing to do with Estrada is to send him to jail as soon as it is legally possible.

Arroyo, a member of the prosecution team in Estrada's aborted impeachment trial, said the senator-judges' 11-10 vote against the opening of the second envelope sent Estrada "out of the frying pan and into the fire."

"Had the impeachment trial been completed, all that would have happened was Erap would be removed from office. But now, the case to be filed against Erap would be plunder. If a public official cannot explain his wealth over P50 million, that is plunder. The punishment for it is death," Arroyo said.

"Let us continue Erap's prosecution. *Kasi hindi naman pwedeng yung perang yon pababayaan natin* (We should not ignore that amount of money that he had amassed)."

"Given the amount as yet uncovered) you can file 50 cases of plunder against Erap. That is the seriousness of the case against him," he said. "I don't care if he goes to jail while the case is being heard against him." ***Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila HI 34° Lo 23°	Baguio HI 27° Lo 15°	Tuguegarao HI 31° Lo 23°	Laoag HI 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone HI 33° Lo 23°	Tagaytay HI 30° Lo 21°	Legazpi HI 30° Lo 25°	Calapan HI 31° Lo 23°
Bacolod HI 30° Lo 24°	Roxas HI 30° Lo 25°	Cebu HI 31° Lo 24°	Tacloban HI 33° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos HI 30° Lo 22°	Zamboanga HI 32° Lo 24°	Cagayan de Oro HI 31° Lo 23°	Davao HI 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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Anti-corruption group to help guard ballots

BAGUIO CITY—An anti-corruption group composed of building contractors and construction workers will join four other groups in Northern Luzon to help guard ballots in the region during the May 14 elections.

The Contractors Against Crime and Corruption (Contracco) will join the Cordillera Guardians Federation Inc., Cordillera Peoples' Liberation Army, Tourist Guides Association and the Baguio-Benguet Muslim Sultanate in the Northern Luzon Political Solidarity Movement (NLPSM) to ensure clean and honest elections.

Pio Velasco, Contracco president, said the NLPSM's 7,000 members would be sent to all provinces in the Ilocos, Cordillera and Cagayan Valley to prevent poll fraud.

The movement will try to finance their own endeavor, he added.

Velasco said their fight against election fraud is in line with his group's move to fight corruption in government.

Contracco was formed last September and has about 400 members, not only contractors but also construction engineers and workers.

Velasco said his group has been monitoring government agencies, particularly the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Philippine National Police, the Baguio City government and the Benguet provincial government.

Contracco is particularly interested in monitoring the bidding and evaluation procedures of government projects.

Once the group perceives irregular practices, they write the concerned part of the agency and request its officials to either transfer the erring employee or department head.

"I started from nothing. But I am now, more or less, an established medium contractor. I want other contractors to succeed in an honest and clean environment," Velasco said.

The group has succeeded in exposing irregularities in at least 10 government projects.

Velasco said his group had also exposed mulcting activities by policemen on its truckers who happen to be Contracco members.

The group would soon expose politicians who demand commissions for approved government projects, he said. ***Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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SURRENDER RITES FROILAN GALLARDO

Giggling Muslim students disturb the prayers of some of the members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. A total of 931 MILF members surrendered to President Macapagal-Arroyo in Tamparan, Lanao del Norte on Thursday.

PMA cadets form foundation to help hazing victims' kin

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Graduating cadets of the Philippine Military Academy's Kaakibat Class of 2001 are leaving behind the best legacy yet for the 103-year-old institution.

A P1-million foundation will be set up to support the family of hazing fatality Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo. The project was proposed by the Corps of Cadets themselves, including 195 cadets scheduled to graduate on March 25.

All the cadets volunteered to shell out seed money for Domingo's mother, a laundry woman, and his siblings, a PMA official told officials of Ebgan Inc., a gender rights advocacy group.

"This is the first such foundation for a hazing victim," said Air Force Col. Efren Daquil, PMA chief of academic staff.

Representing Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, Daquil on Wednesday met with a group of volunteer psychologists, gender rights advocates and parents who are forming fact-finding missions that will trace the impact of violence on military careers.

Lynn Madalang, Ebgan executive director, and psychologist Lety Miana offered to link up with PMA officials to conduct clinical researches into the "culture of violence" in the military.

Domingo died from blows in the solar plexus below the rib cage during a hazing incident on Saturday. Domingo's beating by upper class cadets was ironically a good-natured celebration meant to congratulate him for passing all his courses this year.

The Baguio City police on Wednesday filed murder charges against Cadets Third Class John Louie Ong, Willard Aperocho, Michael Perang and Omar Julius Labajo for Domingo's death.

The four were Domingo's original classmates until he was turned back for a year for academic deficiencies.

The proposed foundation sets a new tone for PMA's anti-hazing crusade, set up in 1997 by retired Maj. Gen. Victor Mayo, Madalang said.

It was also an independent solution being sought out by the volunteers' associates composed of former cadets, who all claim to have been hazed.

"The biggest issues we faced, when we were hazed, was the absence of a counseling service. The cadets even ostracized many of us who were victims. It should be a policy for the PMA to have the offender class shell out money for the hospitalization and counseling of the cadet they beat up. That is the first thing we want from PMA," said Adam Borja, spokesperson of a loose group of former cadets, in an earlier interview.

Borja said he was originally a member of PMA Marilag Class of 1995 until he was forced to quit after he was hazed over an infraction committed by his own class. He told Madalang that he was ostracized into leaving the cadet corps a year after.

Madalang said the foundation must be expanded to include all other hazing victims, including unreported cases before Domingo's death.

23 mercury poisoning cases found in Davao

DAVAO CITY—The problem of mercury poisoning in Davao del Norte is far from over.

A top official of the Davao del Norte provincial health office and 22 other health workers and staff members of the provincial government and a district hospital in the mining town of Pantukan, Davao del Norte, are now among its victims.

Since Wednesday, 14 of the victims have been undergoing a five-day detoxification at the Davao Regional Hospital (DRH) in Tagum City, after they were found to have high levels of mercury in their blood.

The tests were conducted by a team of toxicologists from the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital in Manila.

Dr. Cyrus Trocio, regional chief of the non-communicable diseases program of the Department of Health, said two of the patients are doctors who are also officials of the provincial health office at Barangay Apokon.

Apokon is the site of many gold processing plants which were supposed to have been ordered closed years ago.

Trocio said 21 other victims are nurses, staff members and midwives of the provincial health office, the Pantukan District Hospital, the DOH regional unit in downtown Tagum, and health workers of Monkayo, near the gold rush site.

The 23rd victim is a member of the information office of the Davao del Norte provincial government.

Dr. Annabelle Yumang, regional medical specialist of the DOH technical services division, said the victims were found to have mercury levels of up to 26 parts per billion (ppb) or way above the tolerable 10 ppb.

Trocio said mercury poisoning could be traced to either the inhalation of mercury fumes from the gold processing plants or contamination of the food chain.

WORKERS of a gold processing plant in Barangay Apokon, Tagum City. FILE PHOTO

The victims may have been inhaling for years the odorless and colorless mercury fumes emitted by the gold processing plants in Apokon, he said.

In 1996 and 1997, some students from the Apokon Elementary School in Apokon were found to have high levels of mercury in their blood after tests were conducted by the same team of toxicologists.

The findings prompted the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to suspend the operations of some 30 gold processing plants in the village for violating anti-pollution laws. The plants were also ordered relocated.

But Trocio said his office had received reports that the plants continued their operations secretly.

The reports indicated that a corporation operating one of the plants merely set up a device to muffle the noise of gold processing activities, he said.

Trocio said his office had not discounted the possibility that the mercury has affected the food chain in Apokon and nearby areas.

He cited an earlier study conducted by toxicologists from UP-PGH, which found traces of mercury in fish samples collected from the Tagum public market.

The samples were taken from the Davao Gulf area, the main depository of the Hijo River which traverses Apokon. *Jowel Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Another Chinoy trader abducted

By Carmela Reyes
PDI Central Luzon Desk

STA. MARIA, Bulacan—A Chinese-Filipino businessman and owner of a huge piggery here was abducted by five heavily armed men early Wednesday night in front of his farm in Barangay Bulak here.

Police identified the victim as Marco Sia, 37, owner of Silver Spring Farm and a resident of Metro Manila.

Police reports showed that Sia was driving his Nissan Ultra Eagle pick-up truck and was about to leave Sitio Kaylawig in Bulak when five armed men blocked his path.

The gunmen were aboard a gray Mitsubishi Adventure van with no license plate.

Armed with long and short firearms, the abductors reportedly dragged Sia toward their van and sped toward Barangay Poblacion here.

Supt. Emelito Sarmiento, Bulacan police director, said the abductors have yet to contact the victim's family for any ransom demand.

He declined to give further details of the incident.

Police sources, however, did not discount the involvement of communist rebels in the reported abduction.

A police official said investigators were looking into reports that the abduction and other related incidents in the province were prompted by the refusal of businessmen and wealthy residents to pay "revolutionary taxes" to communist rebels operating in the mountain villages of Bulacan.

A source from the New People's Army in the province, however, denied his group's involvement in Sia's abduction.

Frat war angle in killing of UP students backed

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The Beta Sigma Fraternity chapter at the University of the Philippines College Baguio said it could not discount the police's theory that the killing of its head, Giancarlo Leung, and his friend, Tihani Tingal, may be related to fraternity war.

John Della, Beta Sigma spokesperson, said his group could not just ignore the police angle, although there are others that the police are pursuing.

"It is a fact *na may away* (that there is conflict) and trouble," Della, best friend of Leung, told the Inquirer in a telephone interview on Thursday.

Leung, 22, a graduating UPCB mass communications student, and Tingal, 26, a speech communications graduate of the UPCB, were abducted and killed last week. Their assailants have remained unidentified.

Della, however, said he could not recall if Beta Sigma was involved in a major fight with other fraternities in the university. He said he and Leung entered the fraternity in 1996.

What he could remember, he said, was a fight with some members of a sports organization in the UPCB in November last year and last month over a supposed vandalism of their bulletin board and over a basketball game.

Della said the first fight of Beta Sigma members was on Nov. 15, when they confronted the members of the rival organization over the alleged vandalism.

The confrontation resulted in a fistfight that led to the 15-day suspension of Leung and three other fraternity officers.

Prof. Ofelia Giron, UPCB college secretary, said although Leung was not directly involved, he and the other officers were suspended because of a school policy aimed at easing the tension between warring fraternities.

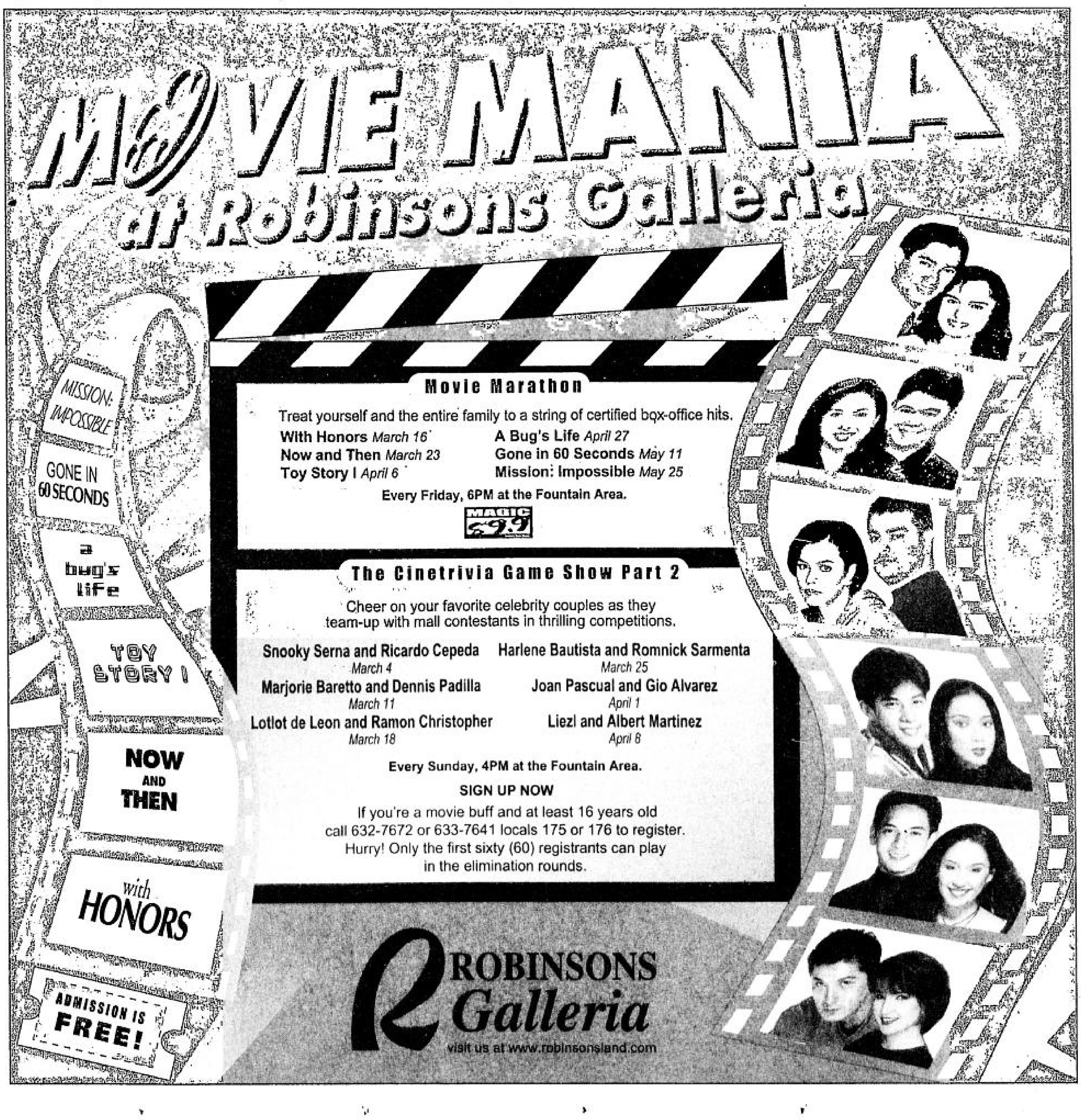
Beta Sigma's rival organization filed a complaint with the UPCB's disciplinary tribunal.

Della said the second encounter was on Feb. 14 when the two groups had another fight during a basketball game. He said a Beta Sigma member accidentally elbowed a member of the rival organization.

"But that was only a basketball game. We do not bring this kind of dispute outside," Della said.

Della clarified, however, that his group was not accusing any organization of being involved in Leung's killing but said it could not downplay the police angle.

He stressed that the fraternity and the sports organization were "neither friends nor enemies."



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Devotees mark 13th day for pilgrimage

BY ROMY AMARADO
Sibulan, Negros Oriental

THERE is something unusual about the small quiet town of Sibulan in Negros Oriental that draws thousands of people hundreds of kilometers away every 13th of the month.

The Catholic faithful flock to Sibulan to fulfill their devotion to the town's "miraculous" patron saint, whose image is ensconced in the parish church.

St. Anthony de Padua of Sibulan, to the devotees, has become their physician and refuge from the harshness of life.

Josephine Alvarez, 31, of Bayawan City, has to travel more than 200 kilometers every 13th of the month to and from Sibulan to honor the saint who, she said, helped her survive one of the most difficult crises of her life.

Several years ago, a cyst that developed in one of her breasts brought Alvarez to Sibulan. She was prodded to go by her mother and friends who told her it might help if she sought the help of St. Anthony.

The cyst was removed during an operation she underwent five years ago. For Alvarez, the operation would not have been a success had it not been for the intercession of St. Anthony.

"He is really miraculous. That's why I always make sure to come here at least, every 13th of the month to thank and pray to him," she confided.

To Rene Cerenal, 32, a pedicab driver of Buñao, Dumaguete City, St. Anthony has been the family's guardian.

One of his twin daughters used to be very sickly. Today, he said, her health has remarkably improved, thanks, he said, to the prayers he had sent to heaven through St. Anthony.

'Inherited faith'

"Because of our prayers to St. Anthony, any member of our family can easily recover when they get sick, especially my twins," Cerenal said in Cebuano.

Some of the devotees "inherited" their faith from their parents who made sure that they would continue their devotion to the saint.

Lito Ytorralde, 45, of Guihulngan town, some 111 kilometers north of Sibulan, almost died of an unknown illness when he was young.

"My mother prayed to St. Anthony to help me survive. That's why I have been following after my mother's devotion," Ytorralde said.

Every member of his family, he said, is also a devotee. And like him, members of his family try to embark on a monthly pilgrimage to Sibulan to pay homage to their patron saint.

Ytorralde said his devotion had become stronger after he survived an ambush staged by communist rebels in the early '80s. The attack, he recalled, claimed the lives of several people, some of whom were his co-workers at Philippine National Oil Corp.

The devotion to St. Anthony is not an overnight sensation. In fact, the miraculous nature of Sibulan's patron saint was said to have first manifested centuries ago.

According to a story found in the brochure about the town's patron saint that was produced by the municipal government, St. Anthony performed his first miracle in the early 1800s before the natives of the town who depended on fishing for their livelihood.

On June 12, 1820, a fisherman was despondent because he could not catch any fish in the open while the other fishermen were enjoying a good bounty. All he caught with his net was a small piece of driftwood that he threw back into the sea.

When he raised his net again, the same driftwood was entangled. This time, he threw the piece farther into the sea, but when he pulled out his net, it had the same driftwood.

Puzzled, he told his fellow fishermen about the strange occurrence. "To their great amazement, they saw an engraved image in the driftwood," according to the story.

Seeking enlightenment, the fishermen sought out their priest, who, "with profound reverence, announced to them that the engraved image (was) the image of St. Anthony de Padua."

The following day, the people celebrated the feast of their patron saint.

A devotion to St. Anthony de Padua was born, handed down from generation to generation, and growing strong over the decades.

Cynthia Patag performs politics 'from the heart'

BY NESTOR BURGOS JR.
Iloilo City

ON HER 45th birthday last week, Ilonggo woman comedian Cynthia Patag flew to Iloilo City in her usual self—the constantly darting eyes, the infectious laugh, and the crisp English accent.

CYNTHIA Patag celebrates her 45th birthday on the campaign trail with Bayan Muna president Satur Ocampo and supporters in Iloilo City.

NESTOR BURGOS JR.

But she came for another kind of celebration, one that sent a serious message to her fellow Ilonggos.

Patag was with long-time friend, activist Satur Ocampo, who has been making the rounds in the country campaigning for Bayan Muna, a newly formed party-list group seeking three seats in the House of Representatives.

Together with Ocampo, Patag has become a common sight in Bayan Muna's campaign trail in the provinces, attending press conferences, forums and assemblies, and doing media interviews.

She talks to crowds, aside from singing, performing, signing autographs and having her picture taken with activists and supporters of the party-list group.

She also makes it a point to prod the usually grim-looking Ocampo to loosen up. "When I sensed that he's tired, I let him read text jokes, even the green ones."

It's not the first time that Patag joined election campaigns. In 1992, she was on the campaign trail of fellow Ilonggo Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago. She, however, pulled out of the campaign a week before the elections. "I sensed that something was turning out wrong then."

Six years later, she helped former President Corazon Aquino campaign for former Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, who was then running for president. In the sorties, she sang the Edsa 1 hit song, "Magkaisa."

This time, though, she is doing it, amid scarce resources and the absence of a well-oiled machinery of traditional political parties, for friend Ocampo and for people who "have been proven to be selfless."

A promise

For Patag, the campaign is a fulfillment of a promise she made in January. During the Bayan Muna national convention where she performed, she vowed to campaign for the group if Ocampo tops the nominees. "He did and here I am now," she said.

The former *colegiala* is not new to fighting causes. During the martial law period, she visited political detainees, including Ocampo, in various military and police camps. She also has links with the militant women's group Gabriela because, she said, among other issues, "the face of poverty is women."

A far cry from the character she played in her stint as a mainstay in the now defunct sitcom "Palibhasa Lalake," Patag rants off social and political issues, sounding like a student firebrand.

"We desperately need meaningful social reforms. It's now or never. Many politicians will run again to loot and rape the country," she said.

Admitting that she is quite intense with what she believes in, she said she would fight for changes, "even if they do not happen in my lifetime."

It is this same intensity that made her a mainstay during the protest actions in People Power II on Edsa, singing nationalist and protest songs to thousands of protesters keeping vigil.

No matter how intense the protests were, however, her comic side would always come through, like the time she danced on top of a table on stage, unaware that it was being used to hold Mass.

"Sacrilegious!"

She also laughs recalling some of her well-off friends who heeded her call for food donations for the protesters. "One friend, with a maid in tow, brought gourmet food, carrot cupcakes and cakes laced with brandy."

Patag herself comes from an affluent background. She traces her roots to the Jardeleza clan of Iloilo. She finished her elementary education as class valedictorian at the defunct Philippine Women's College of Iloilo, and high school at the Assumption School.

She moved to Manila for her college education, first at the Assumption in San Lorenzo and later at the St. Paul's College. It was in De La Salle University, however, where she recently earned her degree in Literature major in Creative Writing.

"I went back to school 20 years after I left it to finish college. I felt like a mom to my classmates," she said.

She still plans to earn a master's degree on Philippine Studies major in Gender and Development in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Her political involvement has raised eyebrows among her family and strained not a few friendships.

"What are you doing with communists? What will happen to your career?" are some of the reactions that she shrugs off as common misconceptions "because there are many more that needs to be enlightened."

In between her comic performances and songs, she appeals to Ilonggos to wake up to the "heartbreaking" social realities. "Act on convictions and make a difference," she urged.

Since the start of the campaign, her presence in sorties has drawn crowds curious to see the famous woman actor. But unlike other performers, who have been hired by politicians to entertain crowds, Patag has imbued political conviction and commitment on stage.

In Roxas City, Capiz, she performed a heart-rending medley of "Baliw," "Bulag, Pipi at Bingi," "Bayan Ko" and "Pilipinas Kong Mahal" to depict social realities and contradictions.

For Patag, it was just among many other performances, but this time, "it comes out naturally because it's from the heart."

Water sports celebrate aquatic side of Ilonggos

BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE
Iloilo City

LONG before the era of jeepneys and American-built highways, the Ilonggos took to the rivers and seas to trade and travel, fish and engage in warfare, as well as celebrate their rituals.

HAYAHAY

Weather-beaten sailors steering their wind-propelled boats, locally known as *paraw*, were a common sight in the seas off Iloilo, while trade, through bamboo rafts (*balsa*), was brisk in the mouths of major rivers, most specially the Iloilo River.

But in the 1900s, changes occurred. Highways were built, motorized bancas ruled the seas, and the Iloilo River was silted and became the city's huge garbage bin.

In 1972, the Department of Tourism revived the *paraw* tradition with the holding of the Paraw Regatta every March.

The regatta is a 30-kilometer course in Guimaras Strait that includes slalom and optimist races. The slalom is a race for speed, while the optimist race involves smaller sailboats on a narrower course.

The competition starts at 8 a.m. and ends at noon.

The regatta has three categories: "A" for boats with waterlines of less than 16 feet; "B" for boats with waterline of 16 to 22 feet, and "C" for boats with waterlines of 22 to 29 feet.

The regatta's management was devolved to the local governments of Iloilo City, Iloilo province and Guimaras in 1991. By then, the contest became known worldwide.

In 1998, the organizers held the "Pinta Paraw." The sails of boats were transformed into huge canvases where local visual artists interpreted the Centennial of the Philippine Revolution.

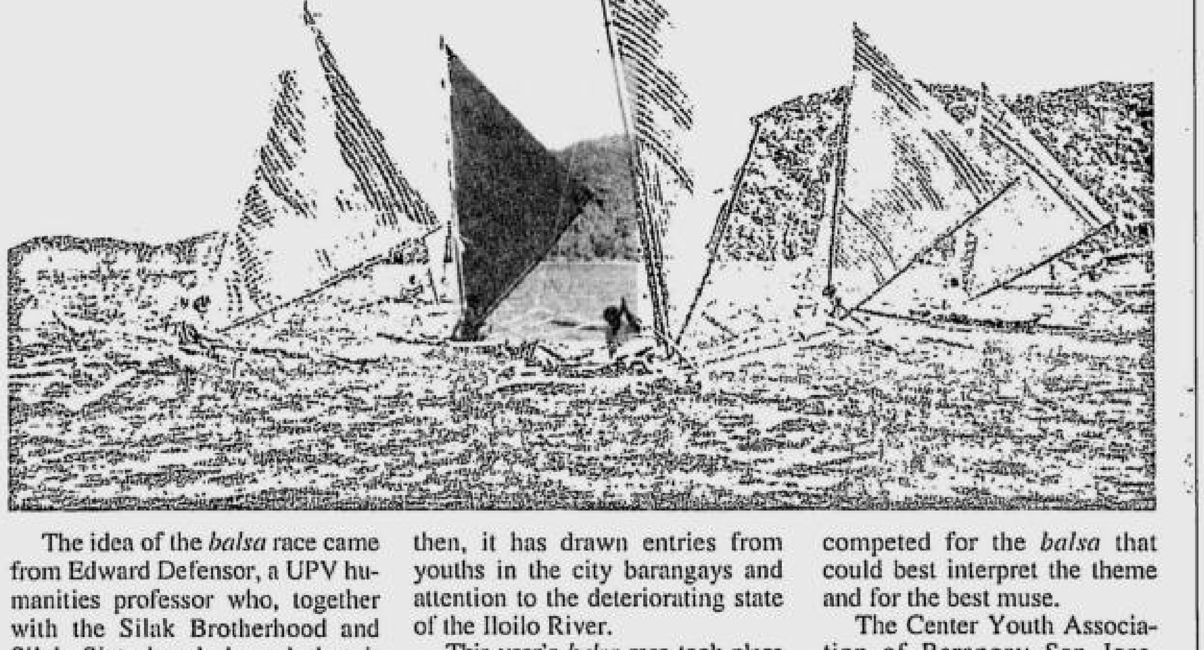
No extra events

This year, the "Paraw Regatta" on March 18, would be just as colorful although it will scrap the extra events, like the Bikini Open, body-building and beach volleyball, which organizers said, are "unrelated" to the main event of boat racing.

Charity Plamenco said Iloilo province, this year's host, had decided that the extra events would be dropped to "heed the call to preserve the *paraw* as a legacy from prehispanic times."

The *balsa* race is a more recent activity organized by a group of artists, professors and students from the University of the Philippines in the Visayas. The bamboo raft, made of poles tied together by rattan, is a traditional means of transportation of Ilonggos when the rivers were not dried up yet due to wanton tree cutting in the uplands.

REGATTAS return to the Iloilo River for the yearly "Paraw Regatta" races on March 18.



The idea of the *balsa* race came from Edward Defensor, a UPV humanities professor who, together with the Silak Brotherhood and Silab Sisterhood, hoped that it would compete with the more popular Paraw Regatta.

The *balsa* race is part of the yearly Tumandok (Native) Festival at the UPV that includes a revival of indigenous games, songs and dances.

UP tradition

In 1997, it became a university activity as part of its celebration of the Philippine Centennial. Since then, it has drawn entries from youths in the city barangays and attention to the deteriorating state of the Iloilo River.

This year's *balsa* race took place on Feb. 27, with the theme "*Gobyerno kag Pamatan-on, Mag-ugyon; Kultura Pauswagon*" (Government and Youth Unite to Enrich the Culture).

Each *balsa* crew had seven members—six rowers and a muse. Each team used only four- or five-meter bamboo poles to navigate the raft. No electronic or gas-operated machine was allowed.

Aside from the race, the teams competed for the *balsa* that could best interpret the theme and for the best muse.

The Center Youth Association of Barangay San Jose, Molo District, copped first place in the race. The University of Iloilo best interpreted the theme of the activity and also won for best muse.

Unlike the *paraw* regatta, the *balsa* race has yet to attract commercial sponsors, but organizers said civic groups and communities had already noticed the event as a good cause to support.

Same surnames and substitution

ECHOES FROM LEYTE

Loly Perez Isiderio

PERHAPS, this is not quite right because there will surely be changes coming in the next few weeks. I refer only to candidates for positions in local government units who had already filed their Certificates of Candidacy (COCs) before the deadline was extended to Feb. 28.

But what can be told now are the so-called shenanigans taken by some filers. I use "so-called" because this is all a matter of perception. Disqualification suits have been filed with the Commission on Elections provincial office under Manny Villegas, who also supervises the Tacloban City office, now under an officer-in-charge.

The cases would have to be filed with the provincial Comelec, but these would have to be finally resolved at the central office in Manila.

In Tacloban, petitions have been filed for the disqualification of "nuisance" candidates who are running only because they have similar surnames as those of candidates running under a party.

Councilors Malou Go-Soco and Edwin Chua and former Tacloban mayor Uldarico Mate are seeking the disqualification of Norberto Go-Soco, Danilo Chua and Vicente Mate. Go-Soco and Chua, the respondents, are running for councilor and vice mayor, while Mate is running for mayor. All are independent candidates and it is believed that they filed their COCs "just to create confusion among voters."

On the congressional level, the candidacy of Carlos Romualdez, the son of Tacloban Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez, is also being questioned on the ground that he is a resident of Mariposa Street in Barangay Bagong Lipunan, Quezon City. He is a candidate for the second congressional district of Leyte, where Vice Gov. Trinidad "Ebbie" Apostol is also running. Apostol is the wife of Rep. Sergio Apostol of the "impeachment prosecution" fame.

More recently, a certain Leonora "Nora" Petines has reportedly filed her COC to join the second district's congressional race. A native of Dulag, she had lived a very high-profile life during the Marcos years.

It looks like a three-cornered fight in the second district, unless the disqualification suit filed against Romualdez prospers. That would leave a one-on-one battle between Apostol and Petines, who is running under the PDP-Laban.

The most interesting case, however, is this "famous" division of the Veloso-Loreto-Petilla clan. Rep. Nene Loreto-Go, a niece of Leyte Gov. Remedios Loreto-Petilla, filed a COC for mayor of Baybay town. But all of a sudden, a few minutes before midnight on the last day for filing, she filed a COC for governor to challenge the incumbent, who is seeking her third term.

Petilla, of course, filed a petition for Loreto-Go's disqualification for failure to withdraw her first COC before filing her second. Loreto-Go cannot be presumed a nuisance candidate though as she is running under the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

But the interesting twist is not so much about the Loreto-Go-Petilla feud, which has been going on for at least two terms, but the case of former Gov. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, who early last month announced that he was running for governor of Leyte. After some time, he told the local media that his own family (wife Juliet, sons and daughter) might prevail upon him not to reenter politics. On the last day for filing of candidacies, Kokoy was nowhere in sight; the next day, the media announced that he failed to beat the deadline.

It seemed that something was going on discretely and surfaced only a few days after Feb. 28. A check with the Comelec showed four candidates for governor—Petilla, Loreto-Go, former Babatngon Mayor Jesus Pido (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan), and somebody who files every election year and is always declared a nuisance candidate.

The entry of Pido under the KBL cast some doubts about Romualdez's candidacy. According to the Comelec, substitution of candidates is allowed, provided both belong to the same party and that the move is approved by the party chair for a reason such as bad health. Pido has been ailing for some time now.

The battle for governorship may just turn out to be another one-on-one, unless Petilla can reverse the tide to her favor by citing her flagship projects.

One of these projects is the revival of the Leyte Sab-a Basin Authority as the food basket of Leyte. This has tremendous potential to contribute to the country's food sufficiency. But then, the Sab-a Basin was a creation of former Governor Romualdez before he left for abroad. He conceived the project as part of a vision for Leyte's development.

A neophyte hits campaign trail

BY BEN SALGADO
Cebu City

THE ISUZU Trooper sped along the Trans-Central Highway on its way to Balamban for the next town of Tuburan in the third congressional district of Cebu province.

A view of the rugged hinterlands and mountain villages along the way gave me an idea of how a political candidate hot on the campaign trail reaches out to voters in order to gain their blessings.

For more than seven months, Joe Soberano, erstwhile executive of a real estate conglomerate, has brought the fight to the road and inched his way to the hearts of the third district's municipalities, barangays, sitios and households.

His aim is to win over people. It's going to be an uphill climb for this neophyte as he is faced with an extremely popular incumbent, Antonio Yapha, a surgeon known for free medical services long before he became a politician.

But first things first. Now, if Soberano could only get through the rocky, muddy dirt roads, hike two hours to a wedding reception, and pass the makeshift footbridge to get to the *discoral* (open air disco) he sponsored. Not to mention the night treks across cornfields, brooks and rivers, with only one flashlight for five people.

So far, he has made *kinawboy* of these.

But nothing prepared me for this trip to Barangay Amatugan, Tuburan, where only the mighty *habal-habal* road warriors dare tread. I was stunned because the four-wheel all-terrain trooper we were riding in just parked on the side road. A little huddle with partymates and after their nod, the candidate hopped onto a *habal-habal* (a motorcycle with up to four people as backriders/passengers) and went ahead.

Gung-ho drivers

Four or five others followed one man for one bike. At the end of the listless dirt road, a wide river opens. The gung-ho *habal-habal* drivers raced through the pebbly bank and knee-deep waters.

"*Wa nay laing agia-an paingon don* (It was the only way to the barrio)," said the driver.

I have heard that when the river swells, the trips are automatically cancelled because the narrow portal in Sitio Marmol would be neck-deep. It was, unfortunately, passable that day.

The convoy of motorcycles coughed and chugged on the trail. We avoided boulders and sometimes climbed over them. We held on to our wits and seats and, at times, got down to push the contraptions when the banks were too high and buried the wheel.

"*Way kaso, Dong. Naa koy bawon nga* spark plug (Don't worry, boy. I brought spark plugs)," my Evel Kneivel said.

The view though afforded some of the most enchanting riverside vistas and rural life, and was worth it.

We arrived and met with barangay officials, and hang out with the people. We later went farther along the river to offer condolences to mourners in a wake.

After winning the wild western ways of Barangay Amatugan, the group made another trip to Balamban. This time, it was a dance party with disco lights and funky music echoing deep in the interior foothills of Pinamunghan.

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"International Contracting-New Projects, Old Lessons" Mr. Vincent Rowan (UK)
"Fiber Optics in Lighting Aesthetics" Dr. Manfred Adamer (Austria)
"Prefabrication, Modularity and Flexibility in Housing Design" Mr. Joseph Wong (Hong Kong)
"The Ecological Design of Large Buildings and Sites: Theory and Experiment" Dr. Ken Yeang (Malaysia)
"Architectural Heritage-Conservation Approach and Restoration Technique" Prof. Chan Yew Lih (Singapore)
BUSINESS ATTIRE
*50% DISCOUNT ON SEMINAR RATES TO BE EXTENDED TO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS UPON PRESENTATION OF IDENTIFICATION CARDS.
Product Demonstration SCHEDULE
DATE	TIME	COMPANY
14 March	1:00 to 2:00 2:00 to 3:00 3:00 to 4:00 4:00 to 5:00	WG&A - Freight & Passage Information Blue Circle - Masonry Cement SMJ Furnishing (S) Pte Ltd Audio-Visual Driver-Audio Access Multi-Room Pipe-in Music
15 March	10:00 to 11:00 11:00 to 12:00 1:00 to 2:00 2:00 to 3:00 3:00 to 4:00 4:00 to 5:00	Delta Faucet - The Cutting Edge in Faucet Technology Intelligent Traffic System-Cleaning Rejuvenation, Protection & Maintenance of Natural Stones OFS - USM Products Blue Circle - Phoenix Fly Ash Cement Wordtext Systems Inc - HP Vectra Elco Philippines Inc. - Home Building System
16 March	10:00 to 11:00 1:00 to 2:00 2:00 to 3:00 3:00 to 4:00 4:00 to 5:00	OFS - USM Products Audio-Visual Driver - Portable Presentations Hocheng Philippines - HCG Product Presentation Wordtext Systems Inc - HP Plotters Stoneworks - The Stoneworks Technology of Cast Polymer Products
17 March	10:00 to 11:00 1:00 to 2:00 2:00 to 3:00 3:00 to 4:00 4:00 to 5:00	Habitat for Humanity Phils. - The Heart of Habitat Coleman Asia - Powermate Generators and Air Compressors Taylan International - Magnetizer Hard Water Conditioner Clear Defense Phils. Inc Infratex - Dual Wall PE Drainage Pipes & Fitting
18 March	11:00 to 12:00 1:00 to 2:00 2:00 to 3:00 3:00 to 4:00	Taylan International - Magnetizer Hard Water Conditioner Dutchboy - The Wonders of Dutchboy Multicolor Paint Stoneworks - The Stoneworks Technology of Cast Polymer Products SMJ Furnishings (S) Pte Ltd
Show HOURS
14 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm for trade visitors
15 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm for trade visitors
16 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm for trade visitors
17 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm for general public & students
18 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm for general public & students
Children below 10 years old are not allowed inside the exhibit hall
Program of ACTIVITIES
14 March 2001	10:00 AM WTCMM	Opening Ceremonies
14 March 2001	6:30 PM Baluarte de San Diego Intramuros, Manila	Filipinana Night (by invitation only)
15-16 March 2001	8:00 AM to 5:30 PM Century Park Hotel	3rd Worldbex Seminars 2001
14 March 2001 15-18 March 2001	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Stage Area WTCMM	Product Demonstrations
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VICTIMS all: Incomes and faces lost.

EDWIN BACASMAS

RELATIVES display pictures of victims inside the courtroom

EDWIN BACASMAS

Ozone disco owners guilty, get 4 years

(From page A1)

wife Racquel, Rosita Ku and son Sunny Ku, and Alfredo Chua.

All present in court yesterday, the six respondents refused to be interviewed. One, Rosita, wept silently during the proceedings.

She whispered "sorry, sorry" to some of the victims' mothers as she left the courtroom.

The two men, who are out on bail since they did not commit a capital offense, may appeal the verdict within 15 days or apply for probation. Personal bodyguards, not police officers, escorted the two out of the Hall of Justice after the morning promulgation.

Judge Marquez made particular notice of Ocampo's "lack of solicitude" as a businessman, citing one witness' testimony that the victims were prevented from rushing out of the burning disco because of a "standing order" to a house detective not to let customers leave without paying during a commotion.

Should have noticed

The court said the building owners did not provide fire exits and sprinklers. The fire extinguishers at the disco were also defective, the tribunal said.

"Ramon and Hermilo, who had been in business for quite some time, should have noticed the architectural defects and fire-fighting device deficiencies of the establishment, which cater(ed) to the general public . . . ordinary foresight could have shown them that the place was a firetrap, it being located in the inner room of a sprawling building," Marquez said.

Investigators found the original fire exit had been blocked by a new building built next door. They also said the main door, the only exit, swung one way inside, preventing easy opening toward the street outside. When the smoke cleared, dozens of bodies were found piled and jammed by the door.

'Vindicated'

Relatives of the victims, many carrying pictures of those who died, applauded when the guilty verdict was read. Some wept. Later, some said they wanted a longer jail term. *(See related story.)*

Joseph Santos, chairman of the Justice for the Ozone Victims Foundation, said his group felt "vindicated" in pursuing the case.

But the judgment has only won half the battle for the victims and their families.

Santos said his group would shift focus on a graft case that is now being tried against Ocampo, the other company officials and several Quezon City building officials. He said he was confident of a conviction because the same evidence was presented.

Not all represented

The P150,000 death indemnity, which covers moral damages and funeral expenses, does not include actual damages the respondents must also pay based on medical expenses incurred.

A list of the dead and injured that formed part of Marquez's 125-page decision showed that actual damages per claimant ranged from a high of P853,000 to a measly P71.

Most of the amounts are five-digit figures, which means many victims or their families, after automatically being entitled to the P150,000, will get total compensation not even exceeding P1 million.

The respondents should shell out a sum of around P21 million, since only 117 of the dead victims were represented in court and the families of the others cannot claim the death indemnity.

Fused

Apart from being the worst fire in the country, the Ozone disco blaze was the worst nightclub fire worldwide since a blaze killed 164 in Kentucky in 1977.

The victims were charred so badly that families had to sort through jewelry, makeup kits and shoes in hopes of identifying the bodies. The heat fused some bodies together.

The dance club on Timog Avenue was packed to full capacity with about 300 people when the fire, caused by electrical overloading, started above the disc jockey's booth around midnight.

The doomed customers initially mistook the sparks and smoke from the faulty power lines as a promotional gimmicks, the court also noted. *With a report from AP*

Erap to appeal Monday; 10th plunder charge filed

(From page A1)

tonio Evangelista and several John and Jane Does.

They were charged, along with Estrada, with plunder, bribery, corruption and violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials.

Saguisag, Estrada's lead lawyer in the case which the Supreme Court dismissed by a 13-0 vote on March 2, said "we have up to Monday to file and we will wait until then."

The ruling also deems that Estrada has no claim on the presidency, which removes his immunity from lawsuits.

Saguisag said he had prepared a 47-page motion for reconsideration, which would be discussed by lawyers assisting Estrada.

Awesome

"It's difficult. You know you are asking the Supreme Court to admit it made a mistake. But from the standpoint of law it's really super strong," Saguisag said. "The odds are awesome, but we're used to this."

Estrada has 15 days or until March 17 to file a motion for reconsideration, but the deadline falls on a Saturday when courts are closed.

Court officials said that even though the deadline fell on a weekend, the court would accept an appeal on the next working day, which is Monday.

If the Supreme Court decides to dismiss Estrada's appeal, the next step would be to focus on the former movie actor's defense, Saguisag said.

"If there's anything we achieve in the Supreme Court, it is we got the time we needed to prepare the defense," he said.

Ms Macapagal was sworn in as Estrada's successor on Jan. 20 after tens of thousands of protesters threatened to march on Malacañang.

The Supreme Court ruling on the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency is seen as Estrada's last chance to stop inquiries into complaints of corruption, bribery and economic plunder.

The high court also issued a 30-day freeze order on the Office of the Ombudsman's investigation of Estrada's case. It will be lifted on March 22.

The lawyers groups which filed the 10th plunder case were represented by Clear, Clamor and Ouster lawyers Leonard de Vera, Romeo T. Capulong, Dennis B. Funa. The other complainants were the Volunteer Against Crime and Corruption led by Dante Jimenez and the Citizen's Battle Against Corruption led by Jesus Martinez.

Beyond doubt

In the complaint, they claimed that the second envelope containing Estrada's bank documents and the testimony of Clarissa Ocampo, senior vice president of Equitable PCI Bank at the aborted impeachment trial, "proved, beyond the penumbra of any doubt, that respondent Estrada and Jose Velarde, owner of the 'Jose Velarde' accounts, are one and the same."

The second envelope was submitted to the Senate impeachment court on Dec. 12, 2000, but its contents were not divulged after 11 pro-Estrada senators voted against its opening.

At the impeachment trial of Estrada, Ocampo testified that she saw Estrada sign bank documents using the Velarde name on Feb. 4, 2000 in Malacañang.

The complainants said Estrada and the other respondents should be prosecuted for plunder, among other charges, for allegedly taking undue advantage of their positions, connections and influence to unjustly enrich themselves with ill-gotten wealth.

They said the other respondents "infused, contributed and deposited" money into the Velarde account "by reason of Estrada's public's office" and his "greed to accumulate wealth."

They pointed out that the amounts were not reflected in his 1999 Statement of Assets and Liabilities. Estrada declared a net worth of P35.8 million in 1999 and, as President he was prohibited from personal business dealings.

"The great disparity between his declared lawful income and the amounts accumulated by Estrada through the 'Jose Velarde' account alone, establishes the fact that said amounts reaching about P3.3 billion, are all ill-gotten and in violation of the law," the complainants said.

They said Estrada had amassed P3.3 billion within a span of 15 months from contributions, gifts, commissions and deposits made by businessmen-friends and cronies.

Mother account

Documents from the second envelope showed that the Velarde account consisted of a "mother account" covered by Savings Account No. 0160-62501-5, a current account (No. 0110-25499-9) and a trust account, among others.

It was opened on Aug. 26, 1999 with the Equitable Juan Luna branch in Manila with an initial deposit of P1. The next day, P81 million was deposited into the account.

Bank records showed that Dichaves deposited checks totaling P210 million into the account. The checks were drawn from his account with the Fareast Bank Cubao-Araneta Branch in Quezon City. He deposited a P20-million check on Sept. 8, 1999 and another P189.7-million check on Nov. 8, 1999.

Jimenez deposited a total of P180 million while Dante Tan deposited P300 million. Pangilinan deposited on Nov. 5, 1999 a check worth P20 million from his checking account with Asian Bank main office in Makati.

Garcia deposited nine checks worth a total of P10 million, and another 17 checks drawn from an Allied Bank account (the total amount was P180 million). Evangelista deposited a P40-million check on July 25, 2000. It was drawn from his checking account with BPI Katipunan in Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Gatchalian and the two Gos—Lucio and George—deposited a still undetermined amount, according to the complainants.

The complainants noted that the Velarde account was closed on Nov. 13, 2000 on the same day that the House of Representatives impeached Estrada.

The 10 pending plunder cases do not involve the complaint for forfeiture filed by 82 "People Power" groups against Estrada. *With reports from Reuters*

'Can't we just burn them too?'

(From page A1)

"The verdict had not healed my wounds," Rene told reporters.

"And now they(Ocampo and Ng) will get to serve time for only four years? That's just like a nudge (compared to our pain). And their sentence could even be cut short if they exhibit good behavior (while in prison)," Galang said.

"My son could have been a composer now, or an actor," said Veronica Montenegro, another grieving parent.

"Money cannot make up for my loss," she said, saying she still keeps the musical compositions left behind by her beloved "Cyd," then a working-student at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music.

Montenegro wanted all six respondents in jail. "They own the place and they should have made it safe before going into business."

But for the victims' legal counsel, the judgement was already a "substantial victory."

"What's important here is that we had the conviction of two of the principal suspects. We would have wanted to have them all convicted criminally, but that's the court decision and we should accept that. Anyway, all six of them are liable civilly," said lawyer Rod Domingo.

Domingo clarified that although a total of 160 persons perished and 95 more were injured in the blaze as per official police records, only 117 of the dead and 35 of the injured were officially represented in court.

"The other (victims) are unaccounted for either because they went back to their home provinces or lost interest in the case. Perhaps some grew apathetic or lost faith in the justice system," he said.

Top PMA grad to get 10 awards

(From page A1)

Humanities, Social Sciences and Management and the Philippine Air Force Saber for being the top cadet to enter the Air Force.

Tabutol will receive his awards from President Macapagal. Cadet First Class Ryan Villar, the class salutatorian, is also a son of a farmer from Panganiban, Camarines Norte. Villar will receive the Vice Presidential Saber and plaques for computing and information sciences and Army professional course as well as the Philippine Army Saber for being the top Army recruit.

Another top graduate is the Baron of the Kaakibat Class, Cadet First Class Jomer Hashim Manampan Hussein. He will receive the Chief of Staff saber. Hussein of Rosary Heights, Cotabato City, is the first Muslim to become baron.

Cadet First Class Fara Krishna Askalani will also join this year's graduating class as the first Muslim woman to graduate from the PMA. She ranked 121st of 194 graduates.

Hussein and Askalani are among the four cadets practicing Islam to graduate this year.

Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion Jr., PMA assistant superintendent, said the death by hazing last week of Cadet Fourth Class Eduardo Domingo will not dampen the graduation ceremonies.

"These cobwebs of violence will not deter us from pursuing a hazing-free academy," Purificacion said.

"Hazing is an individual offense. It depends on the actions of an individual who is having a hard time coping here. But still the glory of our class was affected," Tabutol said.

Will to succeed

Tabutol credited his parents for his will to succeed at all cost. His name attests to that.

"Sadiri" in Ilokano means "something or somebody to lean on."

Tabutol said his father, Geronimo, who tends their three-hectare rice farm likes to read a lot and even dabbles in Ilokano poetry and fiction.

Sadiri is the eldest of two children. His sister, Maileen, will graduate this month at the Cagayan State University with a BS Physics degree.

Tabutol was valedictorian in elementary and salutatorian in high school in Cagayan. He was taking up electronics and computer engineering in Saint Louis College, Tuguegarao City, when he decided to take the PMA entrance examination.

He said that he was not at first interested in military life but decided on it to take off the financial load from his parents.

Most members of Kaakibat Class entered the PMA for the same reason. More than half of the class belong to families earning less than P6,000 a month.

Only 28 of the 195 class members have fathers belonging to the military or police while 12, like Tabutol and Villar, are sons of farmers.

Most fathers are government or private service employees. Most of their mothers are housewives.

"Since time immemorial, most of those entering the PMA belong to poor families. It is their way of uplifting their (families') lives," Purificacion said.

Elite schools

One of the priorities of Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, is to recruit prospective cadets from top schools like the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, University of Santo Tomas and De La Salle University.

Purificacion said they started recruiting from these schools before the close of the school year. He said the PMA is also seriously considering giving additional incentives to recruits from the "elite schools."

Third in the merit roll is Harold Dave Pre of Piat, Cagayan, who will receive the Secretary of National Defense saber, Philippine Navy Saber, AGFO Inc. award and plaque in Navy professional course as well as graduating as one of two magna cum laude in his class.

Rounding up the Top 10 are Cadets First Class Rene Sevilla of Bamban, Tarlac (Air Force professional course award); Florangel Murito of Kabasalan, Zamboanga del Sur (cum laude); Ariel Nicomedes Torres (magna cum laude, leadership plaque); Kristoffer Ilarde of Pioduran, Albay; Francis Rugayan of Quezon City; Concepcion Reaño; and Ian Oswald Dira of Bayugan, Agusan del Sur (cum laude).

Cadet First Class Esperanza Fajardo, one of 10 women in the batch, will receive the journalism award.

The other most contested slot is the class goat or the last cadet in the graduating class.

Cadet First Class Frederick Pascua Isla of Gerona, Tarlac, who was earlier reported to be the goat at No. 195, did not accomplish some requirements for graduation and lost his chance for the "coveted" post, PMA officials said.

Cadet First Class Nasser de Ocampo Arojo of Baguio City, who placed 194th, will replace Isla as goat.

Cadet First Class Ray de Lima of Legazpi City is the youngest graduate this year at 20. The oldest class member to graduate this year is a 27-year-old cadet.

Record-breakers

Tabutol's record number of awards was surpassed only by three cadets: Cadets First Class Eckwood Solomon Jr. (Class 1963); Manuel Gaerlan (1985) and Angel Evangelista (1987). Each received 13 awards during their classes' respective graduation ceremonies.

Cadet First Class Mongkol Nongklangnam Khom-Arwut, a Thai, will be joining this year's graduates. He ranked 40th in the merit roll.

Khom-Arwut, a native of Banlao Sungmen, Phrae, Thailand, is the fifth Thai cadet and 19th foreign cadet to graduate from the PMA, considered as Asia's premier military training institution, since 1960.

Benipayo clueless as staffers find key to voter listing

(From page A1)

Borra admitted before the justices that his legal staff had prepared the draft to help free the Comelec from legal tangles arising from RA 8189, which contains strict provisions on the dates of registration.

"I have not seen that draft bill," Benipayo, who was standing next to Borra, told the justices. "I do not know about it until today."

As it is, Benipayo is doubtful about the Comelec's ability to conduct a special registration because RA 8189 prohibits registration 120 days before an election.

Even if this restriction is cured by an amendment that Congress can make during its three-day special session, Benipayo said he still doubted whether the Comelec could successfully conduct the special registration because of its limited resources.

Not pessimistic, but realistic

"We are not being pessimistic. We are being realistic," Benipayo told the Supreme Court justices.

Benipayo added that the Comelec would have no choice but to comply with the law and hold a special registration if Congress amended the provision on the 120-day restriction.

"If we eliminate the 120 days without eliminating the other safeguards, maybe we could (hold the special registration). But would that be a safe way of doing things?" Benipayo asked.

"The trouble is, we are racing against time. If we impose additional burdens on our election officials, we actually divert their attention from their original responsibility, which is the actual elections, to the registration," he said.

Associate Justice Bernardo Pardo, himself a former Comelec chair, reminded Benipayo that the Omnibus Election Code or Batas Pambansa 881 allowed an easier method of registration.

"The applicant goes directly to the board of election inspectors and his application is approved right (there)," Pardo said.

Pardo then suggested that the Comelec invoke BP 881 in conducting the special registration.

But Benipayo believed that the suggestion could be illegal because of the restrictions and safeguards stated in RA 8189.

"If an amendatory law will make it that simple, we can but would that be the wise thing to do? (Amending the law) is a prerogative of Congress, we will have to comply but I'm afraid we cannot be responsible for the consequences," the Comelec chair said.

Confusion

Benipayo reiterated his previous warning that confusion and disorder could result if the Comelec accommodated the millions of new registrants.

Obviously peeved at Benipayo's position, Pardo told his colleagues in open court that Borra once mentioned to him that registering new voters under BP 881 was "doable."

Pardo then called on Borra, who initially declared that whatever Benipayo's stand on the special registration issue, would also be his position.

"But if I am asked personally, I will give my personal position," Borra said.

Borra then proceeded to discuss his proposal—to register the new voters at the barangay level "since they are only four million" and to shorten the period for finalizing the list of voters.

"The Comelec cannot do it without any amendatory law. While BP 881 has its own safeguards, (we can include the stricter safeguards of RA 8189) by shortening the periods for the approval of the voters' list," he said.

"We will need additional resources. The (Department of Budget and Management) is willing to give P200 million," Borra said.

Pardo reminded Borra, who was Comelec's executive director during his stewardship, that under his chairmanship the poll body was able to register 36 million voters in four days using only P30 million, in time for the 1995 elections.

"I was also able to double the allowance of public schoolteachers from the regular P400 a day to P800 day. And given the two days that they worked, that was P1,600," Pardo said.

"Correction, sir," Borra interjected. "You raised the teachers' allowance only in May 1998."

A no no

In Davao City, Makati Rep. and administration senatorial bet Joker Arroyo said efforts of the pro-Estrada Puwersa ng Masa to prevent a special registration for some 4.5 million young voters could backfire on the opposition.

Arroyo said it was the youth who "propelled" and sustained the five-day People Power II uprising last January that ended the presidency of Joseph Estrada.

"Imagine fighting the youth? Uhh-oh, that's a no no," Arroyo told the INQUIRER at the Rizal Park where he and five other members of the People Power Coalition watched yesterday's Araw ng Dabaw parade.

Arroyo noted that efforts of the 11 pro-Estrada senators to stop the opening of the controversial second envelope at the Senate impeachment trial on Jan. 16 backfired on Estrada and gave birth to People Power II.

Batangas Rep. Ralph Recto, also an administration senatorial candidate, predicted that the proposal to hold a special registration would face rough sailing in both the House of Representatives and the Senate because pro-Estrada legislators would oppose and even derail it.

In Manila, Senate President Pro Tempore Blas Ople said Congress was not likely to pass the special registration bill because of "perception" among members of the two chambers that the new registration would be used by the administration to rig the results of the May 14 elections.

So far, three opposition senators have expressed plans to block the passage of the measure.

Ople said Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Sen. Vicente Sotto III, chair and vice chair of the committee on electoral reforms, which will handle the measure, have expressed their intention to boycott the three-day special session called by President Macapagal. The session starts on Monday.

Earlier, Sen. John Osmeña had announced that he would give the bill rough sailing in the Senate.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that 12 senators, enough to have a quorum, had assured him that they would attend the special session.

For his part, former National Democratic Front spokesperson Satur Ocampo chided Benipayo for issuing a warning that the proposed special registration would result in a voters' list "full of flying voters."

Ocampo, president of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said Benipayo's remarks were "insulting and highly irresponsible." *With reports from Juliet L. Javellana and Gerald G. Lacuarta in Manila; and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Eating is bigger traffic hazard

(From page A1)

distracted drivers suggests that dashboard diners are a much greater threat.

The American Automobile Association's Foundation for Traffic Safety analyzed more than 26,145 crashes that occurred in the United States from 1995 to 1998, concluding that driver distraction played a role in about half.

Among accidents blamed on distracted drivers, nearly 20 percent involved motorists whose attention was lured away by something outside the car—such as billboards, signs, people and other traffic crashes.

But nearly 19 percent were distracted by something they were eating or drinking—such as the North Carolina man who ran into a power pole while trying to rescue a drink that had begun to topple.

Motorists using or dialing cell phones accounted for only 1.5 percent of the distraction-related crashes, the study found. Slightly fewer, 1.4 percent, were distracted by other devices, such as global positioning systems and Internet connections.

More than 11 percent took their eyes off the road to fiddle with radios and CD players, and 9.4 percent were distracted by other occupants of their vehicles, including crying children.

From Los Angeles comes this other oddity in the news about another man who also wasn't paying attention. For want of a dollar, 22-year-old Kirk Tolman lost $7.9 million. The man failed to put a dollar coin into a Wendover, Nevada, slot machine and it cost him the multimillion-dollar jackpot. Instead he walked away with a $10,000 consolation prize.

It all happened on Wednesday morning at the State Line Hotel and Casino just across the Utah state line, about 193 km west of Salt Lake City, said casino spokesman Buddy Frank.

Tolman, a steel worker from a Salt Lake City suburb, was playing at a three-coin Megabucks jackpot machine and talking to a friend when the unexpected happened and a row of "Megabucks" signs came up after the wheels stopped spinning.

Frank said he was notified about a big winner and went out to meet the lucky player.

"I went out and shook his hand," Frank said. "He was just shaking his head. He seemed somewhat chagrined, but not as morose as I would have been. He said he always plays three coins but wasn't paying attention because he was there with his friend."

The jackpot-that-got-away would have been the largest in the casino's history if Tolman had put in a third dollar, easily eclipsing the previous high of $1.3 million. *Reuters*

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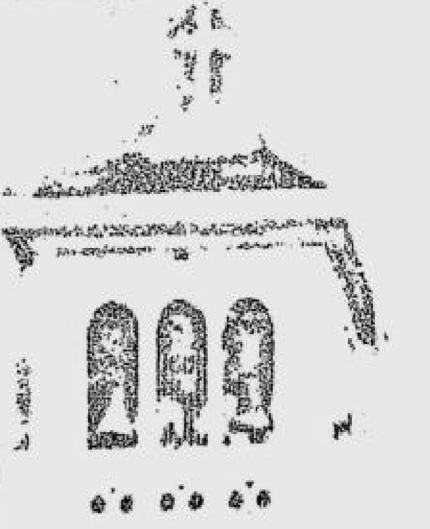

OUR LADY OF MANAOAG
75 Years
Diamond Jubilee

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- **OUR LADY OF MANAOAG ROSARY GARDEN** donated by Mr. Buenasenso & Mrs. Jovita Sy. Blessing & Inauguration Ceremony, **MARCH 18, 2001, 11:00AM**
- **ALAY LAKAD PARA SA INA NG MANAOAG** a joint project of Our Lady's Diamond Jubilee Executive Committee at ng Pusong Makabayan Foundation. **MARCH 25, 2001, 6AM from STO. DOMINGO CHURCH TO QUEZON CITY MEMORIAL CIRCLE.** A Solemn Mass follows immediately
- **MEDICAL-DENTAL-SURGICAL MISSION** a joint venture of UST Medical Mission Incorporated at ng Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag. **April 24 to April 30. Venue: Our Lady of Manaoag Pilgrims' Center**
- **MARIAN VIGIL** of the different religious and civic communities within the diocese. **April 23 to April 30, 7PM 11:00PM. Venue: Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag**
- **MARIAN EXHIBIT** Our Lady of Manaoag History, Testimonies, Spread of the Devotion to Our Lady of Manaoag

CAOILI

RP chesser seeks Gloria help

Young prodigy Caoili in danger of getting stranded in Europe

By Dennis U. Eroa

IN DANGER of getting stranded in Europe, child chess prodigy Arianne Bo Caoili is appealing to Malacañang for financial support .

"I am writing regarding my daughter Arianne, who with her mother Annette are desperately in need of financial assistance and could be miserably stranded in Europe," Arianne's father, Arnold, said in his recent letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Caoili said the Philippine Sports Commission and the National Chess Federation of the Philippines responded negatively to Arianne's financial request due to lack of funds.

"I understand the position of the PSC and the NCFP. That's why I am appealing directly to your honorable office for financial assistance to help relieve Arianne and her mother of their extremely difficult financial situation," the elder Caoili wrote. He added Annette is having trouble meeting her board and lodging fees.

Arnold said that when she was still vice-president, Macapagal-Arroyo granted another chess prodigy—Mark Paragua—a financial reward. "We anxiously look forward to your Excellency's positive response," he wrote.

Arianne, who is now in Frankfurt, Germany, will campaign in Bled, Slovenia from March 24-April 1. She and her mother left for Europe on Jan. 24 using their own money.

"I am doing everything so that Arianne will have the needed international exposure. If I need to beg, I'll beg," said Arnold.

Arianne is considered as the country's brightest prospect to become its first-ever woman grandmaster. Recently, Arianne thrilled local chess aficionados by winning the Asian Continental under 16 championship held last December in Bagac, Bataan. She is also the reigning Philippine women's chess titleholder.

Arnold explained that his daughter needs to compete in high-level chess tournaments in order to earn her grandmaster title before turning 16. "Arianne is the country's youngest FIDE master and next in line is an IM title en route to becoming a GM."

At the tender age of 12, Arianne ruled the World Rapid Chess Championship in Paris and played Board One for the Philippines in the 34th World Chess Olympiad in Istanbul.

Earlier, Arnold requested PSC chair Carlos Tuason for a financial assistance of $3,400 so that Arianne can see action in the world-famous Capablanca Memorial International Chess Tournament slated in Havana, Cuba from May 3-21. GM Silvino Garcia, president of the Cuban Chess Federation, invited Arianne after learning of her achievements.

Venus Williams withdraws; Hingis, Kuerten booted out

INDIAN WELLS, California—Venus Williams, scheduled to play her sister Serena in Thursday's Masters Series semifinals, withdrew from the match because of tendinitis in her right knee.

The announcement, made just as the two were to take the court for their evening match, was booed by the 10,000 or so fans in the stadium.

Venus Williams had shown no signs of the injury when she beat Russian Elena Dementieva 6-0, 6-3 in Wednesday's quarterfinals. Venus also had been warming up with Serena on a practice court not long before they were scheduled to play their semifinal.

"I made every effort to be on the court, stretching, warming up and taping, seeing the doctor," said Williams, who said she decided she couldn't play about 10-15 minutes before the match was to begin.

"I don't like to play with pain because it can make it a lot worse," she said.

Asked if she would have played the semifinal had it not been against her sister, Venus replied, "No, I don't think so."

She limped slightly as she left the interview room.

Serena will play Kim Clijsters of Belgium, who upset No. 1 Martina Hingis of Switzerland in their semifinal, in Saturday's final.

Serena was surprised Venus withdrew.

"To be honest, I'm just as shocked as you," she said. "I hit a bit with Venus before the match."

Asked if her sister was limping then, Serena said: "She could hardly hit, just slice and dropshot."

Serena was in the locker room getting ready for the match, which would have been just the sixth time the two have played as pros, when she learned Venus was pulling out.

"I asked her if she was OK. Her eyes were a little watery," Serena said. "I just wanted to know if she was all right. She said, 'Yeah.'

"She's just been having some knee problems."

The men's top-ranked player, Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil, also lost on Thursday.

American Jan-Michael Gambill, who won at Delray Beach, Florida, last week, upset Kuerten 7-6 (5), 6-4 to move into the men's quarterfinals.

Hingis lost 6-2, 2-6, 6-1 to Clijsters, a 17-year-old rapidly working her way up the world rankings.

In other matches, fourth-seeded American Andre Agassi outlasted Nicolas Kiefer of Germany 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 to move into the quarterfinals. Australian Patrick Rafter also advanced, beating defending champion Alex Corretja of Spain 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Gambill won his eighth consecutive match while ending Kuerten's win streak at 14 matches.

Hingis' loss ended her string of five consecutive finals, a span in which she won three times.

Clijsters was 47th in the world rankings in 1999 and has jumped to No. 19. Making the Indian Wells final will bump her up the ladder.

"That's one of the top 10 players I see in the future, for sure," Hingis said. "She basically didn't really have a weakness today."

Clijsters was thrilled to beat Hingis for the first time in their four matches.

"This is probably my greatest tournament, my greatest victory," she said. "Afterwards, all the people are telling you that you beat No. 1 in the world."

Clijsters was careful not to get too giddy.

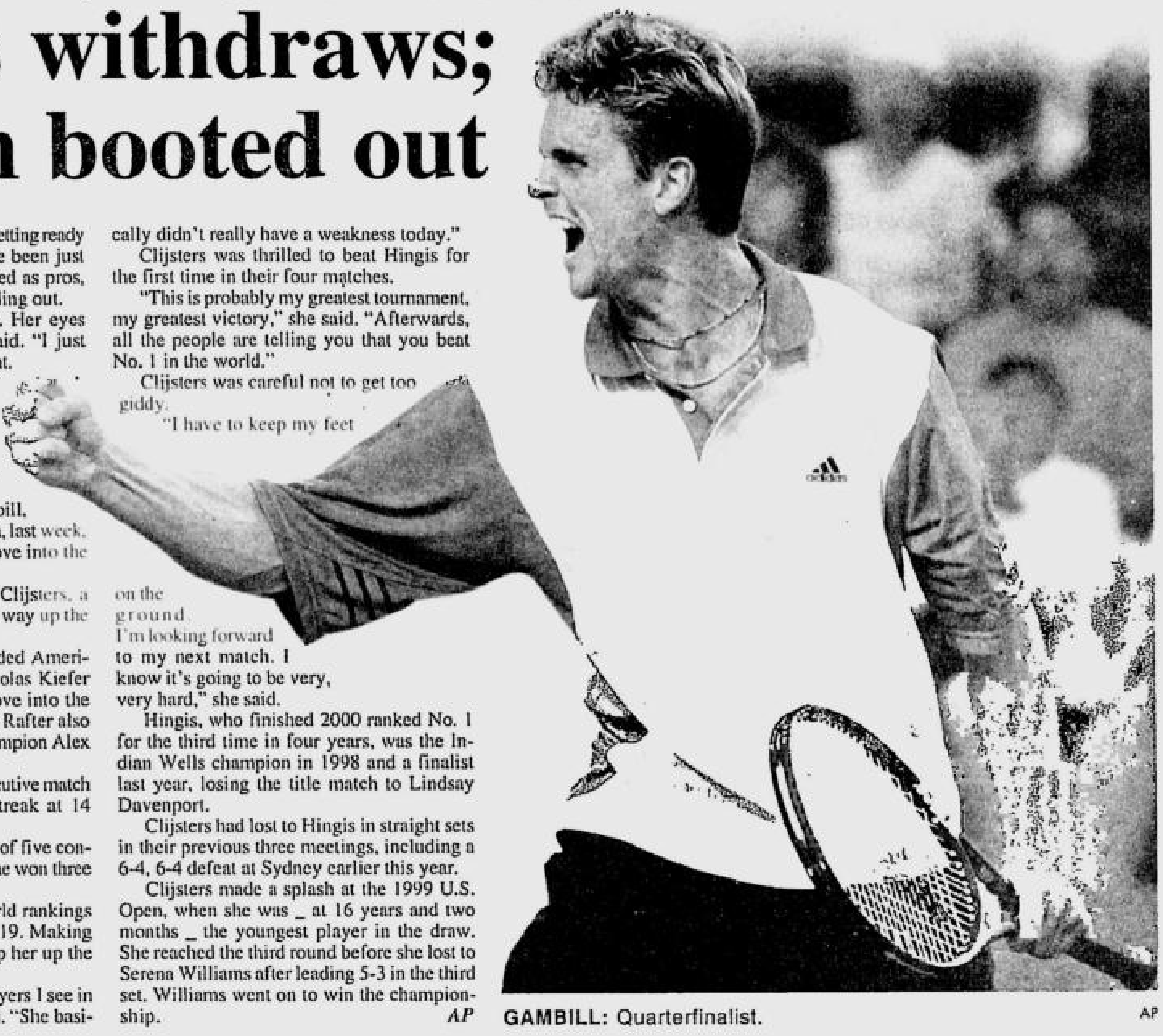
"I have to keep my feet on the ground. I'm looking forward to my next match. I know it's going to be very, very hard," she said.

Hingis, who finished 2000 ranked No. 1 for the third time in four years, was the Indian Wells champion in 1998 and a finalist last year, losing the title match to Lindsay Davenport.

Clijsters had lost to Hingis in straight sets in their previous three meetings, including a 6-4, 6-4 defeat at Sydney earlier this year.

Clijsters made a splash at the 1999 U.S. Open, when she was _ at 16 years and two months _ the youngest player in the draw. She reached the third round before she lost to Serena Williams after leading 5-3 in the third set. Williams went on to win the championship.

AP



GAMBILL: Quarterfinalist.

AP

Peña leads Peace

A BUSINESSMAN who took up the game seriously three years ago leads the overall grand prix standings in the elite Harmony section of the 2001 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express (Peace 2001).

Douglas Peña, the fifth leg winner, is showing the way with 81 points after five legs of the monthly event sponsored by DNS Company and organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia (ACCA).

Other backers are Belgosa Media Systems, Land Bank, Travel Café, Omni Business Center and Topmost Engineering.

The sixth leg will be held on March 31.

Former grand prix champion Jenny Mayor is at second spot with 79 points, while fourth leg winner Dennis San Juan is third with 74 points.

Gary Legaspi is fourth with 71 points and defending champion Jose Ventura Aspiras is a distant fifth with 65 points.

Top cocker race heats up at NCA meet

THE BATTLE for Cocker of the Year heats up on March 19-21, with the staging of the NCA 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum.

Hosted by engineer Pacifico Berin and Rudy Albano, the country's foremost cocker-breeders are taking part in this eighth leg of the 15-leg cock derby season under the auspices of the National Cockers Association.

Leading the entries are early NCA derby champions Thunderbird-Firefly II and IV of Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Thunderbird-Firefly 13 of the Firefly Group, Winning Time DVH of lawyer-sportsman Rudy Salud, New Guagua Coliseum of Eric Yu, RT-114 Geran Mapalad of Ruel Ricafort and E. Santos, Geran of Gerry Fevidal, Capitan II of the Patric Puno-Alan Tan tandem and season-opening winner San Rafael of Jessie Viceo.

Also competing are Danding Cojuangco, James Chiongbian, Jun "Idol" Santiago, winningest breeder Boy Jiao, Jun Cometa, Pampanga's popular Jun and Rudy Jingco, the Madlambayan brothers of Clear Cut fame, engineer Pacifico Berin and Rudy Albano, Alex and Gerry Escalona, Georgio Antonio, the Peping Cojuangco-Esting Teopaco combine, Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Ito Ynares, Gov. Raul Molintas, Meycauayan Mayor Eddie Alarilla, Jobo del Rosario, Boy Diaz and Romy Panganiban, to name a few. Meanwhile, everything is set for the next NCA 7-Cock Derby on March 26-28, with Peping Cojuangco, Esting Teopaco and Eddie and Bomboy Araneta as hosts.

'Joshua' derby slated tonight

FIFTY-TWO tough entries take on each other tonight as the Joshua 6-Cock Derby kicks off at 6 p.m. at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City.

Hosted by Peping Suarez, the two-day event will feature a fierce pit battle between the league's finest cockers led by Joey and Buboy de los Santos, Butch Macasaet, Mauro Prieto, Biboy Enriquez, Joy Hao, Manny Co, Blandy Tolentino, Pol Estrellado, Sonny Lagon, Dennis del Rosario, Boyet Luna, Gov. Ito Ynares, Warlito Bereber, Cong. Lawrence Wacnang, Philip Chiongbian, Dong Lacson, Princess Naldo and Cris Manansala, among others.

Set tonight is the 2-cock elimination, while the 4-cock finals is on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, reservation of slots is in full swing for the P1M Bitaw-bitawan 4-Cock Derby hosted by Ka Soseng Gotengco of Cabuyao, Laguna and assisted by Lando S. Luzong of Marikina City.

The cockfest is scheduled for March 24, 27, 29 and 31. Up for grabs in the four-day spectacle is a whopping P1 million for a low entry fee of P5,500.

Interested parties may call tel. Nos. 833-22-75 or 833-16-38.

GOLF ROUNDUP

G. Rosales, Delasin post hot start

GERALD Rosales and Dorothy Joy Delasin got their championship bids going on a bright note in separate events in India and Phoenix, Arizona, respectively, by firing similar three-under-par 69s yesterday.

Rosales, still seeking his first title as a pro in foreign soil, stood just two strokes off the four joint leaders led by defending champion Jyoti Randhawa after the first round of the $300,000 Wills Indian Open at the Classic Golf Resort in New Delhi.

The reigning Philippine Open champion was in a big group sharing 11th place with compatriot Rodrigo Cuello just one stroke back at 70 for a share of 18th spot.

Danny Zarate and Cassius Casas were borderline cases for the second round cut-off as they carded 73s. Marciano Pucay, meanwhile, shot himself in the foot with a 78.

LPGA Rookie of the Year Delasin got off to another good start with her round spiked by three birdies on a four-hole stretch from the 14th giving her a share of 17th place in the $1 million Standard Register Ping tournament.

Jenny Rosales, the younger sister of Gerald, had a wild back nine (birdies on the 12th, 15th and 16th against birdies on the 13th, 14th and 17th) and settled for a 72.

Already with two Top 10 finishes this season, Rosales was herself in a precarious situation as she stood tied for 62nd spot.

In the Dydo Shizuoka Open leg of the Japan Tour, Frankie Miñoza lapsed with two double-bogeys for a 73 that pulled him from a share of the lead down to 25th.

In Orlando, Florida, Tiger Woods made his first triple-bogey in 1,201 holes on the PGA and European Tours en route to a 71 and fell five shots behind the Bay Hill Invitational frontrunners.

Woods made a 7 on the most difficult hole of Bay Hill, the eighth, as his early season woes continued.

Phil Mickelson, Mark Calcavecchia, Dennis Paulson and Steve Pate were joined by longshot Grant Waite at the top with similar 66s.

Jong Arcano

March 2 2001
Metro Rail Transit Corporation

PRO TOUR BACKERS

Ericsson president Robert Etteborn (left) and Smart PCMSD head Anastacio Martirez shake hands before Philippine Tour chair Bob Sobrepeña after signing the sponsorship contract as title presenters for the third leg of the local pro circuit at Sherwood Hills Golf Club on March 22-25. The two telecommunication giants are putting up a P700,000 pot for the event featuring competitions for regular and senior pros and a pro-amateur sideevent.

Knicks, Lakers beat foes

NEW YORK — Mark Jackson outplayed the constantly booed Chris Childs in the pivotal third quarter to lead the New York Knicks past Toronto 88-72 in the NBA Thursday night, preventing the Raptors from sweeping the four-game season series.

Childs became an instant villain in his first game at Madison Square Garden since being traded to Toronto for Jackson, getting booed every time he touched the ball.

Kurt Thomas scored 22, Latrell Sprewell had 21 and Jackson 11 for the Knicks, who snapped a six-game regular season losing streak against the Raptors.

Vince Carter scored 22 for Toronto but got little help from his teammates. Antonio Davis, with 13 points, was the only other Toronto player in double figures.

Lakers 125, Pistons 119, OT

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Kobe Bryant returned from a two-game absence and scored 24 of his 39 points in the fourth quarter and overtime as Los Angeles rallied from an 11-point fourth-quarter deficit.

Detroit's Jerry Stackhouse scored 46 points, tying the Palace scoring record.

Shaquille O'Neal added 26 points for Los Angeles, which won its eighth straight game at the Palace and beat the Pistons for the 13th time in 14 games.

Chucky Atkins added 20 points for Detroit, while Ben Wallace had 12 points and 15 rebounds.

Complete results:

New York 88, Toronto 72; L.A. Lakers 125, Detroit 119, OT; Seattle 108, Milwaukee 102; Dallas 103, Minnesota 83; Houston 108, New Jersey 106; Boston 105, Phoenix 101.

AP

Subic hosts dancesports tilt

WITH a record field of more than 100 couples in the fold, the Dance Sport Council of the Philippine stages its first major activity for the year 2001—the 2nd National Quarterly Ranking and Alaxan Cup Competition—today at the George Dewey Theater of Subic Bay.

According to council president Becky Garcia, this season-opening event is being held in cooperation with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chaired by Felicito Payumo and sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, Doctor Trusted Alaxan, Legenda Hotel and Winstar buses.

Earlier, a dance sport workshop highlighted the affair, also at the George Dewey Theater, where UK professional ballroom champions Mirko and Marika Selli will perform today a special demonstration number.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Grand Ecole 2. Diva 3. Never Mine 4. Patago
Race 2—1. Be Quiet 2. Dynamite Miss 3. Kay Rufina
Race 3—1. Made to Order 2. Altron 3. Sukiyaki Blues 4. Plus Factor
Race 4—1. Pride of Mandaue 2. Amazing Joe 3. Green Buck 4. Jules
Race 5—1. Little Red 2. Magsaya 3. Baby Love
Race 6—1. Striking Bouncy 2. Gold Marlin 3. Tellmetonight 4. Legitimo
Race 7—1. D Pen Traveller 2. Eightwoconnection
Race 8—1. Bravada 2. Dixie Melody 3. Breakaway 4. Make Your Mark
Race 9—1. Noble Spirit 2. Premiere Event 3. Santa Fe
Race 10—1. Free Entrance 2. Bagoba 3. Flying Fortress 4. Decathlete
Race 11—1. Mighty Glow 2. Padron Real 3. Darth Vader 4. Perfect Gift
Race 12—1. Baby My Beloved 2. Leading Light/ Back to Back 3. I'll Be There/Super Native 4. Air Express
Race 13—1. Beatitudes 2. Le Voyager 3. Al's Princess 4. Wan Star

MARCH 23-25

Eagle Ridge tourney stakes juicy prizes

A RESIDENTIAL lot, an Opel Tigra and two Chevrolet Cassia sedans will be at stake as hole-in-one prizes apart from tournament and raffle prizes worth more than P1 million when the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club stages its inaugural member-guest tournament on March 23-25.

The lot donated by Sta. Lucia Realty and the three top-of-the-line cars sponsored by Golforce, GG&A Club Development, Inc. and GM Auto World Makati will be won by players who score aces on designated holes of either the Andy Dye and Nick Faldo courses of Eagle Ridge.

Registrants have bloated to almost 300 players or 150 teams in the past week and organizers were optimistic their target of 200 teams will be reached before the registration deadline expires on Tuesday, March 20.

The 36-hole event has drawn the support of Readycon Trading and Construction Corp., Turf Co., Exan Builders and Sta. Lucia Readymix and Construction Corp. as major sponsors.

The minor sponsors are RCBC, DC Star Gases, Imus Party Haus, Gerry's Buko Juice, Handyworks Manpower Services, Corp., Prime Deli, Inc. and Ericsson Enterprises.

Engineer Winnie Gob, project director of Eagle Ridge, said the choice of the Dye and Faldo courses has made members and their guests excited about their prospects.

"Rounds at the Dye course are always unpredictable and the Faldo layouts offer the opportunity to make the big move," said Gob.

Awards to be disputed are the low gross, the Class A, B, C and ladies side.

A grand raffle prize of Opel Astra Wagon will be given away during the awards ceremonies on Sunday, March 25.

Other prizes include a Bose audio system, a laptop computer, video camera, digital camera, audio component, colored TV, refrigerator, gas range, washing machine and many more.

Included in the entry fee of P6,000 are free golf cart use for two days, giveaways, tee-house snacks, breakfast and awarding dinner. Members are advised to register their teams or buy raffle tickets worth P1,000 at the Golf Office at the Aoki clubhouse (tel. no. 046-419-2841).

Palarong Pambansa next year

EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco yesterday announced that the Palarong Pambansa will be held next year instead of this summer to allow the teachers and education employees to concentrate on their election duties and to comply with the austerity measures of the government. The estimated P14-million budget earmarked for the games is short of the P22 million sports officials earlier expected to spend for the meet.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Bush lauds Hispanic champ

WASHINGTON—President Bush greeted boxer John Ruiz and congratulated him on becoming the nation's first Hispanic heavyweight champion. Bush and Ruiz chatted for a few minutes Thursday and posed for photographs in the Oval Office. Ruiz showed Bush his WBA championship belt and gave the president a black-and-white, left-hand boxing glove that he had signed. *AP*

Athletes set Malacañang protest march

FILIPINO athletes first marched to Malacañang in protest seven years ago. They will repeat it on Monday, hoping to draw President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's attention to their sad plight.

Almost 200 athletes, majority of whom are members of the national training pool, met yesterday and decided to pursue the protest action for the shabby treatment they've allegedly been getting from the country's top sports officials.

Weightlifter Jaime Sebastian, who led the athletes' march in 1993 with swimmer Eric Buhain, trackster Lydia de Vega-Mercado and bowler Bong Coo, will again spearhead the group seeking an audience with President Arroyo.

"*Wala nang atrasan* (There's no turning back). We've talked with the athletes and they are bent on proceeding to Malacañang," said Sebastian. "I can't refuse the athletes because my heart belongs to them."

Sebastian, the winningest Filipino athlete in the Southeast Asian Games with 19 gold medals and is now the head coach of the Philippine weightlifting team, said they (athletes) are fed up with the empty promises of the sports leaders.

In a signed manifesto, the athletes lashed at the PSC leadership for neglecting their needs, citing the lack of equipment, vitamins, deplorable living conditions at their quarters, insufficient meal allowance and inferior training venues.

The athletes also deplored the misplaced priority of their leaders, giving more attention to renovation and construction of facilities without the benefit of an overall master plan for their maintenance.

They also appealed to Ms Arroyo to institute a major revamp of the PSC, just like what then President Cory Aquino did in 1993 when she replaced then PSC Chair Aparicio Mequi and his commissioners.

Roy Luarca

Spring dribblers nose out Wang's

SPRING Cooking Oil nipped Wang's Sport, 75-74, Wednesday to barge into the finals of the NBC (National Basketball Conference) tournament at the San Juan Knights gym.

Owned by national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, the Spring Cooking Oil boys raced to a 41-31 halftime lead and then held of a searing Wangs rally to earn their first title shot in the tourney.

Coach Tito Palma's Oilmen will meet Army-GP Maryson in the finals set at 7:30 p.m. on March 21. Army tripped Air Force, 78-70, in the other game.

SPRING OIL 75—Saygo 25, Rivera 13, Mallari 10, Cuevas 10, Lana 6, Limbo 3, Omana 2, Anonuevo 2, Habelito 2, Magallanes 2.

WANGS 74—Reyes 24, Ferma 16, Aquino 13, Lagare 8, Garcia 7, Joto 4, Pizar 2.

Halftime: 41-31.

LITERAL (right) confers with Philippine men's team coach Boyzie Zamar in a recent photo. Behind them is Graham Lim. JOAN BONDOC

BAP ROW OVER

Jalasco yields post to Literal

By June Navarro

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines' leadership pandemonium has finally ended.

In a bizarre and unexpected twist, Freddie Jalasco yesterday relinquished his BAP presidency, paving the way for Quintellano "Tiny" Literal's assumption of the post in an agreement brokered by Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit.

Dayrit told the INQUIRER he sat down with Jalasco and Literal and both agreed to join hands for the successful staging of the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championship here in the country.

Prior to their meeting, Literal and Jalasco separately announced their own Seaba staging in different venues but scheduled the tournament on the same date, April 2-7, putting amateur basketball in a state of quandary as both camps relentlessly engaged in mudslinging for the last four months.

But it all ended yesterday as Jalasco, for the sake of unity and national interest, decided to yield the presidency of the BAP to Literal.

"I'm expressing my gratitude to all the leagues (PBA, PBL, MBA) that supported the BAP's cause, especially to PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad, the PBL board, coaches and athletes for instantly having answered the call of the BAP," Dayrit quoted Jalasco as saying.

Still, Dayrit said Jalasco would continue to head the POC SEA Games Task Force and act as the country's chief of mission in the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games in September as the security of tenure provided for by the POC charter.

Jalasco, Dayrit added, will also be a part of an executive committee tasked to handle the staging of the Seaba. Dayrit will be the interim chair while Literal and Jalasco will sit as members.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Jalasco for comment.

Dayrit also named Philip Ella Juico, Mauricio Martelino and Fernando Carascoso as board of advisers of the organizing committee with Juico, former chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, acting as spokesperson.

Yet whether the PBL selection recently formed or the national team composed of MBA stalwarts will compete in the Seaba is still a question yet to be answered by the organizing committee.

"But personally, priority should be given to the MBA players since they have been training cohesively for almost a year now," said Dayrit, adding the venue will either be at the Philsports Arena or the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Meanwhile, PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino refused to comment on the BAP twist, saying he has yet to get informed of the facts behind Jalasco's resignation.

In another development, MBA bigwigs Ramon Tuason and Sandy Araneta temporarily turned over their players in the national team under the care of the PSC. Carlos Tuason, PSC chair, said he would return the supervision of the players to Literal once the POC issues a notice affirming Literal's leadership.

Jalasco, who earned the recognition of the POC, moved for the dissolution of the MBA-backed national team Monday night after the players voted against him in support of Literal. He immediately replaced the team with a PBL selection.

Regrettable but life goes on–Trinidad

By Dennis U. Eroa

PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad said the Freddie Jalasco experience was regrettable but expressed confidence that the league will become stronger and united as ever.

"It was regrettable but life goes on," Trinidad told the INQUIRER. "I can proudly say that the PBL did not think twice when given the chance to serve the country."

Trinidad said he was heartened by the PBL's display of unity and dedication when it heeded Jalasco's request to form a national squad for the South East Asian basketball championships slated April 2-7 in Manila.

"The act of forming the national team in so short a notice is an act of courage. This has become possible because the PBL is one, harmonious family," Trinidad said.

The PBL and the PBA backed Jalasco in his turf war with the Tiny Literal group.

Despite the recent development, Trinidad said the PBL team under coach Junel Baculi will continue its daily practice at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

But he admitted that the PBL stint in the Seaba is now unsure. "Common sense dictates that Literal will now call the shots. It now depends on the new leadership whether it will field the PBL selection in the Seaba," Trinidad said.

While describing the PBL selection as the best and brightest in amateur caging, Trinidad said he doesn't plan to "rock the boat."

"Life after all is not about sprints. It's a marathon game," said Trinidad.

Gherome keys Mobiline win

GHEROME Ejercito delivered the goods in the extra period to lift Mobiline to an 85-76 triumph over slumping Tanduay last night in the PBA All-Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ejercito, flashing his versatility during isolation plays, pumped in six of his 14 points in overtime, mostly done against the lanky Dondon Hontiveros down low, to help the Phone Pals earn their fourth victory in nine outings.

Prior to Ejercito's exploits, Mobiline relied on Jerry Codiñera and Don Camaso but Tanduay diminished whatever firepower the Phone Pals had in regulation, which ended up at 71-all.

Too bad the Rhummasters, behind the torrid shooting of Jeffrey Cariaso and Dindo Pumaren, went short of going for the kill as the Phone Pals dealt their seventh debacle against three wins.

In the second game, Purefoods whipped Sta. Lucia Realty, 74-66, to improve its card to 4-6. The Realtors fell to 2-7.

June Navarro

Lhuillier rips Sokors, gains Laguna tilt final

By Roy Luarca

GAMES TODAY (Aquino Stadium, San Pablo City)
2:00 p.m.—Cebu Lhuillier vs RP Men's Team
3:30 p.m.—Wang's Ball Club vs Joonang University

CALAMBA, Laguna—Cebu-Lhuillier silenced the guns of Joonang University in the last four minutes en route to an 89-72 rout yesterday that pushed it to the final of the 1st Bert Lina-Jam Mercado Battle of Champions at the Camp Vicente Lim Gym here.

The Jewelers' relentless help-out defense down the stretch rattled the South Koreans, who were unable to score after knotting the count at 72, and shoved them to their third straight win in as many starts in the five-team tournament.

Even if the Bobby Parks-reinforced Jewelers drop their last elimination round game against the Philippine men's team today, they would still figure in the knockout championship to be held at the Aquino Stadium in San Pablo City tomorrow.

Parks led the Jewelers anew with 29 points, 19 in the second half, and got ample support from Ronald Paraiso and Nilo Alforque.

The Nationals, on the other hand, are in a must-win situation as with a 2-1 record they could drop into a tie with the Laguna Lakers and possibly the Koreans for the second final berth.

Laguna wound up at 2-2 following a 103-96 beating of Wang's Ball Club in the second game yesterday, while Korea (1-2) is slated to meet Wang's (0-3) today.

The single-round tournament organized by sportsman-businessman Bert Lina and supervised by Basketball Association of the Philippines Region IV director Johnny Tam is sponsored by Healthy Options, Federal Express and Jam Transit.

Dance athletes to World Games

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THIS year, the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines turns five years old. And to mark the celebration, two noted dancers—Edna Ledesma and Bong Marquez—will represent the country in the World Games in Akita, Japan, in August.

Edna and Bong are national champions and ranked No. 4 in the Asia-Pacific region for the Latin category, but in terms of international exposure, they match up poorly with their rivals who have too much experience, skill and talent in world-class competition. Even then, the locals' participation in the World Games is already something to crow about because the DSCP is just growing up compared to the other dance organizations which have been there for ages.

"We never have anything like this," said a beaming Becky Garcia, hyperactive council president since 1996. "We are just a young organization," she added, "yet dancesport has made its presence felt in the international dance scene."

At present, the council is concentrating on discovering and training young dance athletes some of whom will show their wares tomorrow at the George Dewey Theater in Subic during the 2nd Quarterly Ranking and Competition-Alaxan Cup. This blue-ribbon affair will mark the council's first big activity for the year 2001 and will feature several veteran internationalists and many young and upcoming talents all over the Philippines. A workshop conductedby topnotch foreign professional coaches and dancers also marked the Subic bash.

Ms Garcia, who also chairs the education and culture commission of the Philippine Olympic Committee, said the Subic sortie is part of the council's year-round series of competitions and workshops in the grassroots to professionalize Philippine dancesport or ballroom dancing.

"We need these foreign coaches badly, she stressed, "since all quality dance starts with the prime steps. Of course it will entail a lot of money to bring them here, but we need their presence in the country. Perfecting quality techniques and choreography will take time, that's for sure, yet we are willing to wait until the day when the Philippines finally wins that gold in the Olympics and the World Games."

* * *

GOOD FAITH. Ever the gentleman-sportsman, popular lawyer Rudy Salud has withdrawn his protest over the plan to stage the May 20 world title fight between World Boxing Council super flyweight champion Masamori Tokuyama and challenger in Joo Cho in Seoul, South Korea, instead of in Pyongyang, North Korea.

Learning that the change in venue was reached in "good faith," Salud, manager of WBC No. 1 contender Gerry Peñalosa, informed WBC president Jose Sulaiman that he was withdrawing his protest and agreeing to the fight being held anywhere in the spirit of goodwill through sports. Salud had earlier agreed to forego the mandatory title shot allotted to No. 1 ranked Peñalosa in order to give way to the historic rematch in Pyongyang since it would contribute to promoting peace between the two Koreas. However, when Salud learned that promoter Kusung Lee was staging the fight in Seoul in violating of their agreement, he protested. But when Salud found out that Lee, together with Tokuyama's father, had visited Pyongyang to convince the North Koreans to host the fight—and failed—the level-headed Filipino sportsman readily withdrew his protest, saying Lee's action was more than enough show of good faith. Meanwhile, it's back to business for Peñalosa who will fight former WBC junior flyweight champion Keiji Yamaguchi of Japan in May at the Araneta Coliseum.

Karting: 3-way battle expected

A THREE-WAY battle for supremacy in the team race looms in the second leg of the 2001 Shell Super Karting Championships tomorrow at the Carmona Racing Circuit in Carmona, Cavite.

ARC-Tony Kart tries to extend its dominance when it seeks its second straight win in the team competition on this prestigious, nine-part series organized by Carmona Circuit Phils. and sponsored by Coca-Cola, Bridgestone, Nokia, Demvel's Enterprises, Eastway Racing and Match Box/Hot Wheels.

Bannered by well-known movie/TV actor Dominic Ochoa, ARC-Tony Kart defeated Kart 1 Demvel's in the kickoff leg last March 4.

We expect another tight battle in the team competition this weekend," said project manager Rose Feria. "ARC-Tony Kart will surely try to make it two in a row, while Kart 1 and Demvel's will try to get back into contention."

The battle for top honors in the individual categories is just as exciting.

Jess Garcia of Kart 1 guns for his second straight win against Jess Cabalinan and Mon Tanjuatco of Demvel's in the centerpiece Formula Super A category.

Garcia, the 28-year-old lawyer from Cebu City, topped their action-packed first leg despite the challenge of Cabalinan and Tanjuatco.

Also favored to duplicate their first-leg victories are Angelo Baretto in the Demvel's-sponsored Formula 125; Manuel Borja in the FSL Light; Victor Yap in the FSL heavy; Allan Uy in the intercon; and Tyson Sy in the Jr. Kt. and Cadet 85cc.

For more information, call Carmona Racing Circuit at tel. 817-2241.

Ali says sorry to Smokin' Joe

NEW YORK—Muhammad Ali has apologized for some of the things he said about Joe Frazier before their legendary fight 30 years ago.

Frazier, who for years was bitter about Ali's comments, has said recently that he wanted to put that behind him.

"In a way, Joe's right," Ali said in an interview published in Thursday's New York Times. "I said a lot of things in the heat of the moment that I shouldn't have said. Called him names I shouldn't have called him. I apologize for that. I'm sorry. It was all meant to promote the fight."

Frazier outpointed Ali in what was billed as "The Fight" on March 8, 1971, in Madison Square Garden. They fought twice more, with Ali winning both times.

Before the first fight, Ali called Frazier an "Uncle Tom" and said he was "too ugly to be the champ." Before the third fight, he compared Frazier to a gorilla.

"I like Joe Frazier," Ali told the NY Times. "Me and him was a good show. It was a good traveling show." *AP*

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

MOTOR SPORTS: SBK Superbike Highlights at 8:30 a.m. (r-2:30 p.m.) on Star Sports
F1 Qualifying Malaysian Grand Prix at 1 p.m. on Star Sports
Max Power at 3 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
BASKETBALL: NBA Action at 7:30 a.m. (r-7:30 p.m.) on ESPN
NBA—Sacramento Kings vs Philadelphia 76ers at 8 a.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on ESPN, Toronto Raptors vs New York Knicks at 4 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
NBA Inside Stuff at 6:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
Chinese National Basketball League, Final #1 at 7 p.m. on Star Sports
BOXING: Thrilla in Manila at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN
GOLF: This is the PGA Tour at 7:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
PGA Bay Hill Invitational, Second Round at 11:30 a.m. on Star Sports

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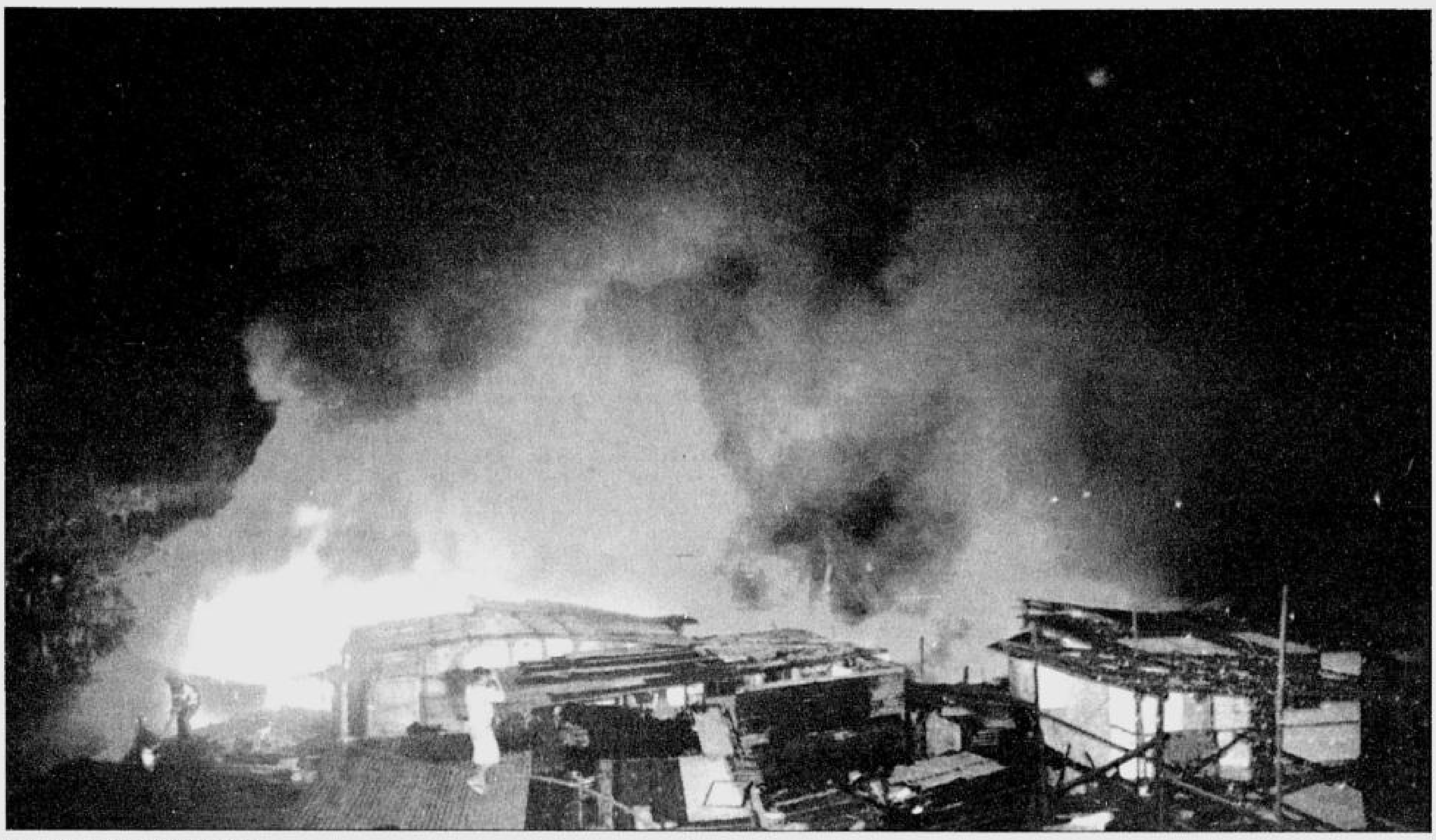
CAMPAIGN TRAIL A24, A26

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

'Tomboy love' among domestics in HK A26

Car thieves who killed 2 women nabbed



LONG HOT SUMMER

RANDY HORMILLOSA

March continues to justify being designated Fire Prevention Month as fire hits several places of the metropolis. The latest blaze gutted the houses of about 500 families in Guadalupe Viejo in Makati City around midnight Friday.

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday identified two members of a car theft syndicate behind the kidnap-slay of several car owners, including a 45-year-old woman and her 14-year-old daughter.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the syndicate's modus operandi was to steal the cars then kill the drivers and passengers to mislead authorities.

The syndicate would then dump the bodies of its victims in two creeks at Barangay Bangyas in Calauan, Laguna.

On Jan. 21, the NBI Special Action Unit recovered the hogtied bodies of Helen Ko Calupig and her daughter Arlene Grace from the site, according to Wycoco.

In a press conference yesterday, the NBI chief presented suspects Albino V. Paradino Jr., 38, of Tunasan in Muntinlupa, and Alfredo P. Hernandez, 48, of Bayanan in Muntinlupa.

Wycoco said a third suspect, Donald Pagkalinawan alias Dona, is still at large.

The two suspects, who were arrested last week, are facing double murder charges with the Las Piñas City Prosecutors Office, and car theft and frustrated murder charges with the Department of Justice.

SAU chief Edmund Arugay said his men were sure Paradino and Hernandez were the ones who abducted and killed the mother and daughter "since they were in possession of the victim's car when arrested."

"The two were nabbed by the Muntinlipa Police while on board the stolen blue Mitsubishi Adventure van belonging to the Calupigs," Arugay said.

On Jan. 20, the Calupigs went to the Zapote public market in Las Piñas to buy bakery prod-

CAR THIEVES/ A24

GMA orders more cops deployed

By Jerome Aning

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered more policemen into the streets of Manila as her young government battled popular perception that crime has shot up dramatically since she assumed office.

Also yesterday, the anti-crime group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) yesterday urged Ms Macapagal to convene a "Peace and Order Summit" as it expressed concern over the rise of heinous crimes in the city.

Last week, two students of the University of the Philippines in Baguio City were abducted and murdered, and the naked body of a young woman who was raped and shot to death was found on a creek near the City Hall of Parañaque.

Ms Macapagal has also launched a special anti-crime telephone hotline and announced the deployment of an additional 1,000 policemen on the streets, many of them outside schools and in

GMA/ A24

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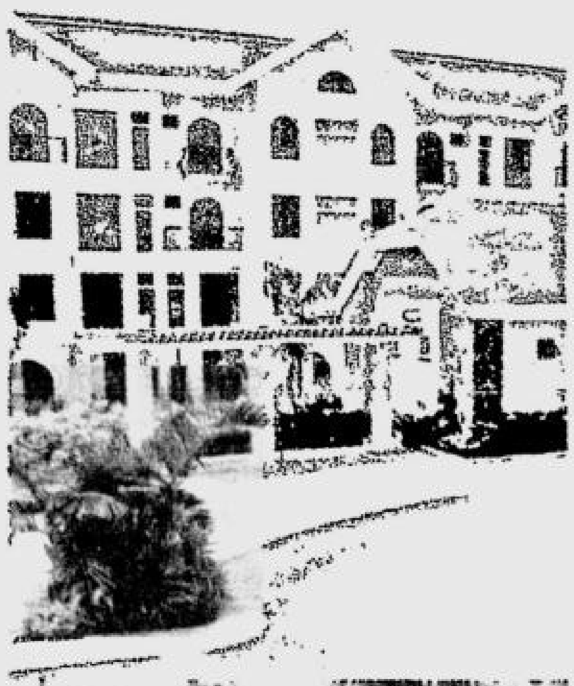

QUIET SECLUSION...
AND COSMOPOLITAN RECREATION...
TWO PATHS THAT MEET AT

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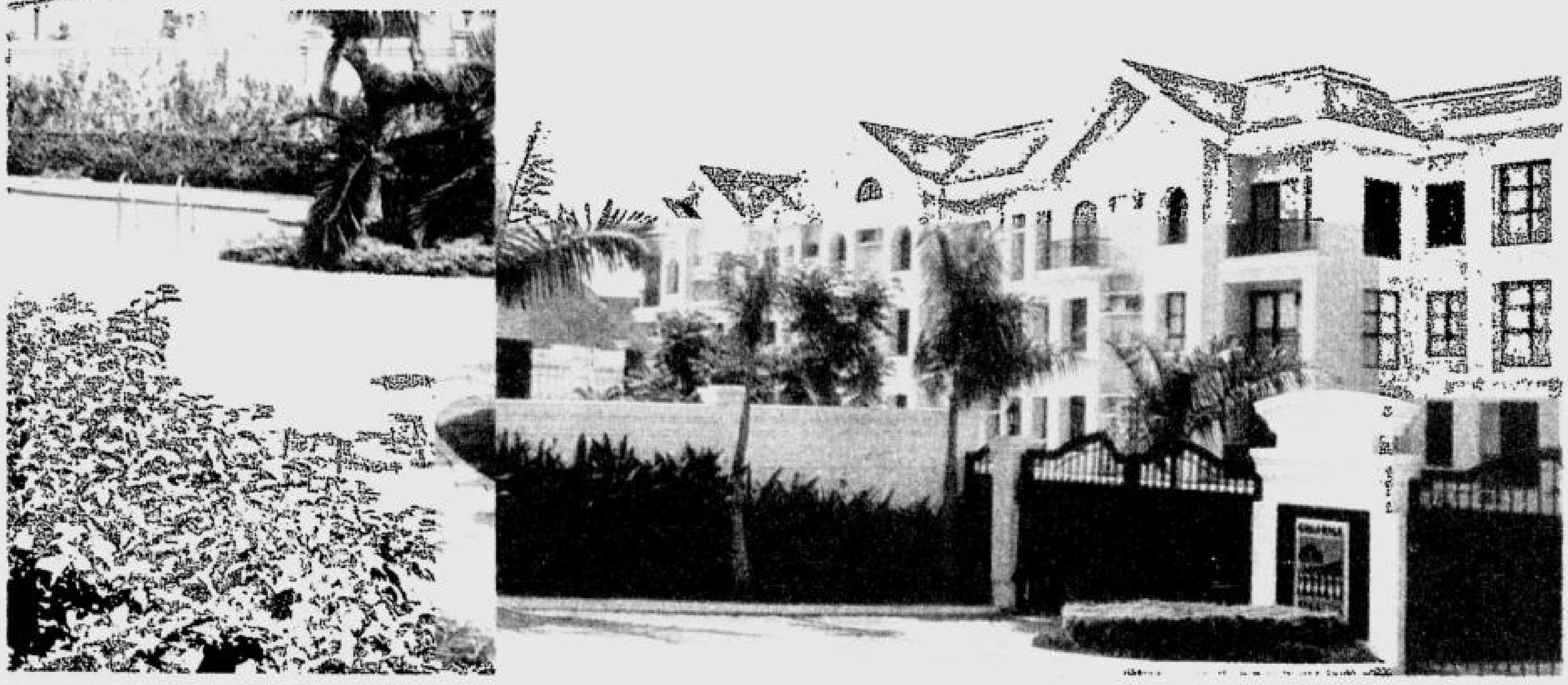

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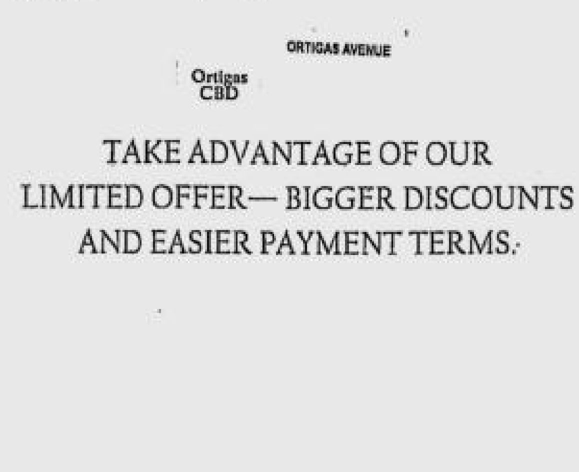

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For Announcement Purposes Only

More raps vs suspect in killing of PTV-4 man

By Philip C. Tubeza

POLICE are throwing the book at Eduardo Esguerra, the Bahala na Gang member who allegedly killed a PTV-4 cameraman-driver on Tuesday.

The Central Police District yesterday filed additional charges of frustrated homicide, robbery, violation of the election ban on deadly weapons, and violations of city ordinances against tattoos and deadly weapons, said investigator PO3 Jun Mortel.

Esguerra, 29, of Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City, was charged earlier with murder for the killing of PTV 4 employee Tomas Edora, 41, in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) building on Elliptical Road, Mortel said.

But it turned out that an hour and a half before Esguerra and an unidentified companion stabbed Edora 11 times, Esguerra had robbed and tried to kill Chow King restaurant crew member Efren F. Lampasa, 22, of Bai Compound Visayas Avenue, Quezon City, Mortel added.

The suspect also stabbed Lampasa on Elliptical Road but the victim survived. Lampasa later joined barangay officials in hunting down and capturing the suspect.

Lampasa said he was walking home when Esguerra held him up at the corner of Visayas Avenue and the Elliptical Road around 8:30 p.m.

After Esguerra took his wristwatch and bag, the suspect stabbed Lampasa in the left chest before escaping, Mortel said.

Lampasa, however, was able to reach his boarding house and asked friends for help. They brought him to the East Avenue Medical Center, where doctors were able to save his life.

The following night, Wednesday, Lampasa joined barangay officials in hunting for Esguerra. Authorities were already then looking for notorious robbers on Elliptical Road because of Edora's death.

Lampasa saw Esguerra on North Avenue.

A 22-year-old male, who saw Edora's murder, positively identified Esguerra as the killer of the cameraman, said investigator PO3 Leo Tabuena.

"The witness also almost became a victim of Esguerra on Tuesday," Tabuena said. "But he was able to run to the guardhouse of DAR before the suspect could do anything to him."

Esguerra is detained at the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit detention cell in Camp Karingal. Police are hunting down his accomplice in Edora's killing, Tabuena added.

Vendor gets life for rape

By Christian V. Esguerra

A CALOOCAN City regional trial court sentenced to life imprisonment a vendor for raping the 16-year-old sister of his live-in partner five years ago.

Judge Silvestre Bello Jr. also ordered vegetable vendor Rufino Montano, of Stall No. 1, New Asia Building at the Bonifacio Monument Circle, Caloocan to pay the victim P125,000 in damages.

In a seven-page decision, Bello found Montano guilty of raping the girl in his stall at the Bonifacio Market about 2 a.m. on June 22, 1996.

The girl, who is now 21, was sleeping in the stall when Montano suddenly mounted her while poking a .38 revolver at her neck, according to court records.

She told the court she tried to fight off Montano's sexual advances but he was too strong for her.

Montano threatened to kill the girl if she told anyone of the rape.

Even if the girl's sister, Montano's lover, arrived at the stall an hour after the rape, the girl said she had been too scared to confide in her sibling.

But two months after the rape, the girl said, she told her aunt in Malabon that Montano had raped her and that she wanted to file charges against him.

Montano claimed that he and the girl were lovers and had sex several times.

He told the court that the girl sued him out of jealousy after she found out about his relationship with her older sister.

But the court did not believe Montano's alibi and went instead with the girl's testimony.

"She stood firm and steadfast in her narration, delivered her account of the incident in a most natural way that an impartial mind could be freed from the doubt or suspicion of embellishment," wrote Bello in his decision.

Low discipline within the AFP

HOW low has military discipline in the country gone down? An example of how low it has sunk is when a lower ranking general confronted AFP chief of staff Gen. Angelo Reyes over why he was not chosen for the top Army post.

Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling, Southern Command chief, reportedly brazenly asked the outgoing AFP chief of staff: "Sir, why are you appointing Cimatu as CGPA (Commanding General, Philippine Army) when I'm senior to him and I have more accomplishments than he has?"

Maj. Gen. Roy Cimatu, chief of the Army's 4th Infantry Division, was handpicked by Reyes as Army chief to replace Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, who has been appointed to replace Reyes who retires today, his 56th birthday.

* * *

Camiling is a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class 1969; Cimatu is from PMA Class 1970.

Since he graduated from the PMA a year ahead of Cimatu, among other things, Camiling said he had the priority of being chosen for the No. 1 post in the Army.

But Camiling should be told that seniority is no longer an important criterion among star-rank officers when it comes to being appointed to choice positions. The No. 1 consideration is the trust and confidence of the President who is the AFP's commander-in-chief.

* * *

Generals— whether they wear one, two, three or four stars—are all equal because general is already a political rank. Officer ranks from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel are professional ranks since they follow the time-and-grade pattern.

For example, a second lieutenant fresh from civilian life cannot be appointed battalion commander because he doesn't have the time and grade needed for such a position. That position is meant only for a lieutenant colonel or major who has served time in the military.

But when an officer reaches the rank of full-fledged colonel or brigadier general, he already becomes a political officer because his rank and designation already depend on the president of the republic, who is a politician. In fact, his promotion is already subject to the confirmation of politicians —senators and congressmen— who are members of the Commission on Appointments

That's the reason why they say a general holds a political rank, instead of a professional rank.

* * *

So, General Camiling, you

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

should not grumble that a junior general got the position of Army chief instead of you.

Perhaps the junior general has other qualities you don't have like the trust and confidence of the commander-in-chief.

And, stop grumbling because you not only sound like a child who wasn't given candy but also you set a bad example among the military officers corps and enlisted personnel because of your action.

You should be reminded, Mr. Camiling, that a military man doesn't complain; he just follows orders. If you didn't know this, you have no business being in an institution where its members follow orders first and ask questions later.

* * * *

May the conviction of a former Quezon City station commander and his subordinates serve as a lesson to all policemen who fool around: Times have changed, a new morality has taken hold of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Supt. Francisco Ovilla and nine of his men, including a police lieutenant, were sentenced to death on Thursday for releasing two Taiwanese drug traffickers and keeping the evidence for themselves—P650,000 worth of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu and a Honda Civic.

Two of Ovilla's former subordinates, SPO2 Reynaldo Resurreccion and PO3 Wilfredo Gonzales, told on their former superior officer and colleagues. They turned state witness, claiming they couldn't stand Ovilla's illegal activities.

Rogue policemen will now think twice before committing a crime because they have their morally upright colleagues to reckon with. Policemen no longer think like members of the Mafia who strictly observe *omerta* or the code of silence.

* * *

When Evangeline Lourdes "Luli" Arroyo, the President's daughter, said in Boy Abunda's show last week that she was nobody special, she meant it.

I was at Venezia Bar in Makati on Thursday night when I saw Luli sitting with a friend in a corner of the already crowded bar. They were unobtrusive. She didn't have any bodyguard inside the bar watching over her and her friend.

The other customers who recognized her said there were one or two men with military bearing who were outside the bar. But they, too, were low- profile and unobtrusive. Luli even rode an unmarked car.

* * *

Luli's behavior in public is in complete contrast to the actions of the mistresses and sons of disgraced President Estrada, especially Jinggoy and Jude Estrada, and JV Ejercito.

Jinggoy, Jude and JV moved around with at least a squad of bodyguards each. A squad is composed of nine to 12 military men. Such a big number of security men cannot be hidden from public view when it moves, more so when they ride in vehicles marked Presidential Security Group (PSG) with blinkers on.

The bodyguards of Estrada's boys pushed people around when they got in the way of their wards. The bodyguards followed the boys inside restaurants and bars, filling up the place. As a result, many customers would leave a place when Jinggoy, Jude or JV were around.

"Luli's behavior is the epitome of humility," said a Venezia habitue who had seen the swaggering sons of Estrada when they were still in power.

GMA orders more cops deployed

(From page A23)

the Chinatown district—prime targets of ransom kidnappings.

"We must find a better way to nip crime in the bud," Arroyo said, calling for greater police visibility and greater effort from prosecutors and prisons as well as increased support from the community.

"We do not have to debate about statistics. The facts are already there," Arroyo said.

Claiming to speak for its members who have "grim experience and works on real life cases, the VACC said it was saddened by the recent surge of "high-profile and gruesome" cases of kidnapping, rape, and homicide cases.

In a March 15 letter to Ms Macapagal, VAAC chair and president Dante Jimenez said the proposed peace and order summit, which will be participated in by non-government organizations and the civil society, including the business, religious and student sectors, should work for a "more vigorous and holistic approach" to crime-fighting.

Jimenez also noted the huge number of crime victims that have been trooping to the VACC office to seek assistance.

"The daily crowd of victims, we believe, speak eloquently of the real picture in our peace and order situation beyond the cold statistics," Jimenez said.

Philippine National Police acting chief Deputy Director General Leonard Mendoza earlier allayed concerns about crimes taking place in the first quarter of the year. He cited statistics showing a mere 7-percent increase in index crimes-including kidnapping, rapes, murders, robberies with homicide-compared to the same period of last year. *With AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, March 17, 2001
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Mic 7:14-15, 18-20
Gospel: Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Tax collectors and sinners were seeking the company of Jesus, all of them eager to hear what he had to say. But the Pharisees and the scribes frowned at this, muttering, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." So Jesus told them this parable: "There was a man with two sons. The younger said to his father: 'Give me my share of the estate.' So the father divided his property between them.

Some days later, the younger son gathered all his belongings and started off for a distant land where he squandered his wealth in loose living. Having spent everything, he was hard pressed when a severe famine broke out in that land. So he hired himself out to a well-to-do citizen of that place and was sent to work on a pig farm. (. . .) Finally coming to his senses, he said: 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will get up and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and before you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Treat me then as one of your hired servants.' With that thought in mind he set off for his father's house.

He was still a long way off when his father caught sight of him. His father was so deeply moved with compassion that he ran out to meet him, threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. The son said: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you. I no longer deserve to be called your son . . .' But the father turned to his servants: 'Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and kill it. We shall celebrate and have a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.' And the celebration began. (. . .)"

Commentary:

The memory of our follies and sins can never change us. It is our living encounter with a loving God, prodigal in his mercy and compassion, that enables us to see a way out of the rut we have made for ourselves and others. In the same bent, we are enabled to render solidarity with others, who are equally loved by this prodigal God, until all are enveloped by his justice, mercy and love. When we confess, we are forgiven mainly not because we have confessed our sins, but because we confess our faith in a God, who has engendered us and will unceasingly do so.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)—Novation—An obligation may be extinguished by novation, pursuant to Article 1292 of the Civil Code. Novation of a contract is never presumed. It has been held that "[i]n the absence of an express agreement, novation takes place only when the old and the new obligations are incompatible on every point." Indeed, the following requisites must be established: (1) there is a previous valid obligation; (2) the parties concerned agree to a new contract; (3) the old contract is extinguished; and (4) there is a valid new contract. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Panganiban, Third Division, Security and Trust Company, Inc. v. Cuenca, G.R. No. 138544, October 3, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

Car thieves ...

(From page A23)

ucts for their bakeshop.

They were on board their Adventure van when they were abducted at Shoemart Las Piñas at about 9:30 p.m., according to Mrs. Calupig's spouse, Arlito.

Arugay said during interrogation, Hernandez confessed that he, Paradina and Pagkalinawan stole the van.

"According to Hernandez, Paradina flattened the tires of the van by using a nail and pretended to help Mrs. Calupig replace the tires," Arugay said.

Paradina then hitched a ride with the Calupigs. Once in the van, he pulled out a knife and used it to threaten the elder Calupig.

Arugay said Paradina then commandeered the van and drove to Lipa City.

"Afterwards, he and the other suspects went to Caluan, Laguna, where they murdered the mother and daughter, suffocating them by the use of plastic bags, and dumped the bodies in two separate creeks," Arugay said.

In February, Edita Y. Aquilizan filed a complaint with the NBI to prosecute for car theft and frustrated murder a group of unidentified men.

Aquilizan told Arugay the armed men stole her car and left her for dead in a Calauan creek.

"She was thrown on the same spot where the lifeless bodies of Helen and Arlene were found by a barangay tanod," Arugay added.

Aquilizan asked help from residents of the nearest house.

"The occupants of the house told her that another body had been dumped in the creek about a week ago," Arugay said.

This led Arugay's men to suspect that the car theft syndicate had been dumping their victims in the two creeks to conceal them.

As NBI agents were tracing the car thieves, the Muntinlupa Police arrested the two men while on board the stolen Mitsubishi van. They were charged with violation of the Anti-carnapping law.

"But we know that the two have knowledge of the killings since they were in possession of the stolen van," he said.

True enough, the two readily confessed to the crimes during interrogation.

They also claimed that a certain prisoner at the National Bilibid Prisons was acting as their leader.

"But it could be hearsay; they could implicate anyone," Arugay stressed.

Rudy F broke his word —Planas

By Leah Salterio

QUEZON City 3rd District Councilor and congressional candidate Mike Planas cried foul after the city's mayoral candidate and his party mate, Rudy Fernandez, announced that he was supporting the candidacy of Sen. Anna Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng as representative of the 3rd District.

Fernandez, however, said he had the go-signal of Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) to endorse the candidate he wants.

Planas and Fernandez are both running under the LDP banner.

Planas said he had a meeting on Feb. 28 with Fernandez and Joseph Peter "Jopet" Sison, who is LDP's vice mayoral bet, and they agreed to support each other's candidacy.

"We agreed to stick to party lines," Planas said.

Fernandez is the overall LDP chair in Quezon City, while Planas is the chair for the 3rd District.

"This is really the political ballgame," Fernandez said. "Mike and I didn't agree on the conditions he wanted that's why I didn't endorse him. But I have nothing against him."

Fernandez, however, didn't want to disclose the conditions that Planas had set.

"That will mean a breach of confidence if I tell you the conditions he wanted," the actor said. "When I was entering LDP, he (Planas) said so many things against actors and now he expects an actor to be on his side. I don't bear grudges, but he should just stick to what he said."

A two-term councilor of the Quezon City's 3rd District, Planas underscored the importance of loyalty and commitment.

"Yes, politics does make strange bedfellows, but not to the extent of reneging on commitments, especially for a newcomer like Rudy," Planas said.

"If he (Fernandez) cannot even keep his word among three men, how could he keep his word to the people of Quezon City? There is no room in public service for 'political shopping.'"

Planas said he intends to stick to the issues that matter most to his constituents, such as health, education, sanitation, environment and legal assistance.

"These issues are the heart and soul of my candidacy, not who I'm paired with or up against. *Simple lang, trabaho lang.*"

Binay pledges more aid for special children

MAKATI Mayor Elenita S. Binay had pledged more support services for the pupils of Makati Special Education Classes.

Binay said the services would include additional services in education, health and nutrition for the physically and mentally challenged children, and would be rendered by the Ospital ng Makati, the Makati health department, and the social welfare department.

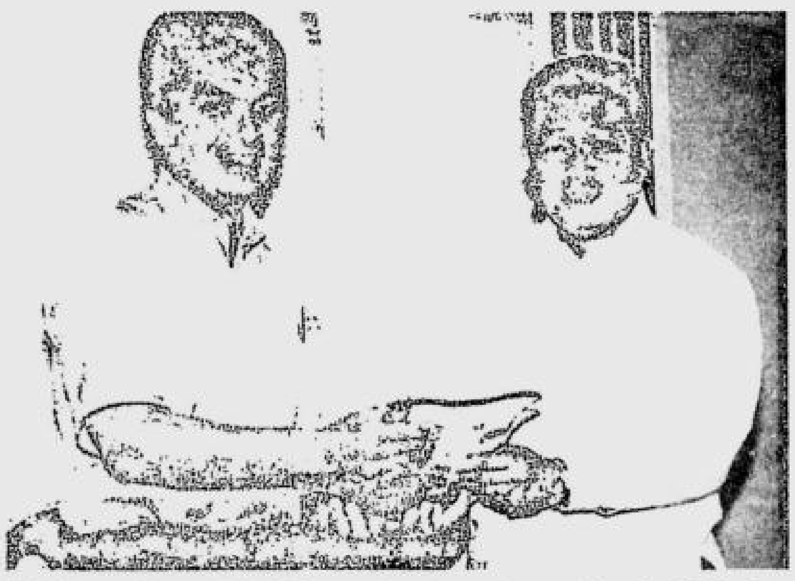
"I had ordered the concerned departments to include in the children's activities the Lakbay-saya, the weekly feeding program, and regular diagnosis and medical treatment," Binay said.

She pledged the additional support when the 38 SPED pupils visited her recently.

The special classes for special children, called "Busilak na Paglingap," were launched on June 6, 1995. They are being held at the Hen. Pio del Pilar Elementary School along Arnaiz Avenue in Barangay Pio del Pilar, the only SPED Center in the DECS division of Makati.

Classes for hearing- and visually-impaired pupils started in 1995 while mentally handicapped and autistic pupils started in 1997. At present, there are 38 pupils in the self-contained classes, 10 in self-paced learners group and 17 in the mainstream SPED.

Earlier, the city government of Makati has provided educational materials, ventilated rooms, speech room, Braille system for the blind, hearing aids, and wheelchair, among others.



NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco has been honored by the Philippine National Police (PNP) Narcotics Group (Nargroup) for his commitment to the government's campaign against illegal drugs through the construction of a two-storey dormitory for drug dependents from Navotas. The dorm is inside the Nargroup Drug Rehabilitation Center in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig, Metro Manila. The plaque of recognition was given by Nargroup chief Deputy Director General Jewel F. Canson during the center's 2nd anniversary celebration.

Aksyon Demokratiko slams Cayetano in Pasig contest

THE AKSYON Demokratiko leadership assailed the Lakas-NUCD chair, Sen. Rene Cayetano, for endorsing traditional politicians contesting a local seat in Pasig without first consulting officials of the People Power Coalition (PPC).

Augusto "Bobit" Sanchez, Pasig City chair of Aksyon Demokratiko, said he was dismayed over the actions of Cayetano in hastily proclaiming Soledad Eusebio as the Lakas-NUCD mayoral bet in Pasig.

"We can see on the campaign posters of Eusebio that Lakas is backing her candidacy," Sanchez said.

The Aksyon Demokratiko chair allegedly informed Cayetano that Eusebio, wife of incumbent Pasig City Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio, is a party mate of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Three-term Mayor Eusebio is reportedly a *"kumpadre"* of Estrada.

However, members of Eusebio's camp vehemently denied Sanchez's allegations, pointing out that Soledad Eusebio's candidacy is strongly being supported by the PPC.

Eusebio's camp also said the campaign of the mayor's wife is also being backed by the deposed president's Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) and the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC).

During People Power II, Mayor Eusebio actively supported Estrada, mobilizing supporters who later figured in a violent pro-Erap rally in Makati on Jan. 19.

Politics as family business

By Jerome Aning

POLITICS INC. has become a thriving family business in Manila where parents, spouses, children, siblings, and even distant relations with the same family names of incumbent and former government officials are competing for the votes of some 900,000 Manila voters.

The race has begun for 146 candidates gunning for mayor, vice mayor, six seats in the Lower House and 36 seats in the council, with the same names from old political clans to wannabe political clans appearing as aspirants for both congressman and mayor as the family business goes public. And it's a contest that could confuse even the most politicized and astute voters.

Add to these the usual squabbles that happen even in the best of families where brother would go against brother or son would challenge father.

And as usual, no Philippine election of recent times had been complete without the ubiquitous presence of show biz stars either as campaigners or—God help us!—candidates themselves. Even a newspaper publisher and former crony of disgraced President Estrada has joined the political fray in Manila.

All four top contenders for mayor have sons or nephews seeking election or reelection for seats to the city's six districts in the House of Representatives or the Council.

Leading the patriarchal pack are Liberal Party candidates father and son tandem—incumbent and reelectionist mayor Lito Atienza and son Alejandro, popularly known as Kim, who wants to keep his seat as a 5th district councilor.

An old name in Manila politics is one of Mayor Atienza's main challengers: Amado Bagatsing of the People Power Coalition whose nephew Don Raymond is also gunning for reelection in the 4th district.

Even if he gave way to Bagatsing as the PPC's mayoral bet, former Mayor Mel Lopez is batting for his brother Jaime's comeback in the congressional race in the 2nd district. Another member of the clan, Honorio Lopez II, is running as councilor in the 1st district.

Former Manila mayor and past Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim is out to get back City Hall while his son Roland is running for congressman in the 1st district. The older Lim is running under the KKK Party.

All but six of the 36 incumbent councilors are aiming for a second or third term. And those who have run the course of their terms in the city council are seeking congress posts—Abelardo Viceo in the 2nd district and Councilor Ma. Paz Herrera in the 4th district, whose son Harold James wants to inherit the seat his mother has vacated.

Don Ramon Bagatsing and Edward Maceda V, son of former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, and Amalia Tolentino, wife of third-termer councilor Gerino Tolentino, are running for councilors in the 4th district.

Incumbent Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna of PDP-Laban will be vying for his post against another third-term councilor, Roger Gernale of KKK, former city administrator Ernesto Dionisio of LP, and comedian Roberto "Amay Bisaya" Reyes Jr.

Lacuna's Junior is running as councilor in the 6th district, while Gernale's wife Corazon is seeking to replace her husband in the 5th.

In the congressional race, five of the six incumbent representatives are running for reelection: Ernesto Nieva in the 1st district, Nestor Ponce in the 2nd, Harry Angpin in the 3rd, Rudy Bacani in the 4th and Joey Hizon in the 5th.

It's a face-off among Viceo, Jaime Lopez and Ponce for the 2nd district, and a head-on collision for the congressional seat in the 1st district between Nieva Rogelio Lim and Martin Isidro Sr., whose son and namesake is batting for reelection as councilor in the 1st district.

Angpin is pitted against Leonardo Fugoso, whose councilor wife Ma. Asuncion is also running for reelection in the 3rd.

The show biz stars are also seeking to glow brighter in their political careers, like reelectionist Councilor Francisco Dumagoso in the 1st district. Dumagoso is Isko Moreno in the movies.

Robert Ortega Jr. and Cita Astals are hoping to be reelected in the council in the 5th district, while comedians Luciano "Lou" Veloso and Larry "Pipoy" Silva are aiming to retain their Council seats in the 6th and 3rd districts.

Ex-convict-turned-public servant Greco "Butch" Belgica, whose life story of crime, punishment and reform was made into a movie a few years ago, is running for councilor in the 6th district.

But the descendants of the late Sen. Pablo Ocampo Sr., a statesman during the American and Commonwealth eras, are in the forefront of old Manila political clans and are apparently strengthening their stronghold in the 6th district and expanding their territory to include the 1st and the 5th.

Councilor Patrick Ocampo is running for reelection as his sister, incumbent third-term Rep. Sandy Ocampo, gives way to their father Pablo Ocampo III for the congressional slot. Another Ocampo sibling, Pablo IV, is also seeking a councilor's seat in the 5th district.

Ocampo III faces a tough battle against former presidential adviser for Latin American affairs and Manila Times publisher Dante Jimenez, who's running as an independent, and the PPC's Bienvenido Abante.

Apparently banking on top-of-mind awareness of the Ocampo name, even distant relatives Vicente and Noli Ocampo are both running in the 1st district and Ireneo Ocampo in the 5th.

After all, most local businesses are a family concern. But it's still up to the voters if they want to be part of which family.

Airport trolley concessionaire told to stop collecting fees

TJ Burgonio

AIRPORT authorities flexed their muscles for the first time on Thursday and ordered a delinquent trolley concessionaire at the old Manila Domestic Airport to stop collecting pushcart fees from passengers.

Airport general manager Edgardo Manda said it was about time concessionaire K-Services rendered "genuine service" to the public by adopting a free pushcart system.

He said K-Services' has been raking in millions of pesos from its porterage business every year since 1976, but it has not been religiously paying its annual concession privilege fees to the Manila International Airport Authority.

"It has been making money at the expense of the airport authority," Manda said in a phone interview. "If we don't ask them to adopt this kind of system (free pushcart), they would be emboldened to continue their old ways."

The Imperial family owned K-Services and has a standing P9-million debt in concession fees to the MIAA. It has managed to evade payments of its arrears by filing cases in court, according to airport officials. At present, it charges P20 for each pushcart.

Manda's order was meant to warn the concessionaire to stop operations if it could not implement the free pushcart system. But to implement the system would spell death for the concessionaire's business.

But Manda said K-Services could still charge porter service fees.

Despite having been delinquent in paying its dues, K-Services' contract was renewed last year. But a team of legal officers of the MIAA is now reviewing the contract, said the airport manager.

According to Manda, K-Services started the porterage business at the airport in 1976, using a provisional permit. At one point, the firm continued to operate even if its contract had not been renewed.

In 1993, the MIAA ordered K-Services to turn over its operations to the airport authority but it managed to get a court injunction. Since then, it had managed to renew its contract with the backing of airport officials.

'Going against strong public opinion is the story of my life'

(From page A29)

we were poor because that will be a lie. But I will not say we were rich, either. My father was a lawyer and he gave us the best possible education he could give us.

"Our neighbors were poor. One of my best friends is the daughter of a very poor farmer. All my children were born in Maysilo, but my only regret is that they did not experience barrio life the way I did."

Role model

Her role model is her brother, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

"He is a very good fiscalizer," she says. "He has balls. He's not afraid of anyone.

"I was not able to vote in 1998 because I was in Pagudpud, Ilocos Sur during the elections. But I would have voted for him. If he was not in the race, I would have voted for Erap (Estrada)."

She has denied that Estrada is financing her campaign, but she does not believe that her friendship with the former president will affect her candidacy.

"I will not even mind if Erap endorses me," she says. "The constituency of my district will not judge me because of that."

She plans to be a legislator in the same way that she ran the MTRCB, her movie production outfit Reyna Films or her household.

"I'm always organized. I am studying hard because this is legislative and you need to know a lot of laws. This is not just studying movie scripts."

What qualities make her good for the job? "I don't look as old as I am. I'm hard working. I know how to talk to people and I'm committed to whatever project I do. I cannot do anything which will not have my hundred-percent commitment."

Leadership

Siguion-Reyna equates leadership with courage, intelligence, integrity and strength of character.

"I believe all the leaders of our country have those qualities, but the difference lies in their priorities," she says.

"Nobody is indispensable. That's why I work myself to the bones. I have to know everything, including what my secretary or my housemaid is doing so that if they leave me, I will not be helpless.

"That's not saying I don't trust other people. You die today, somebody takes your place tomorrow. So you will not be dependent forever on other people."

She has no immediate plans about her first 100 days in public office.

"It's too presumptuous to make promises and if you don't fulfill them, your constituency will be disappointed. I have to know the people of my district. Their needs will be my platform."

From three barangays, Siguion-Reyna has received complaints about clogged drainage which cause floods. She also wants to address the perennial garbage problem of Makati.

"I think the best way to deal with garbage is to segregate, like what we are doing in the villages now, especially Forbes Park. We give instructions to homeowners and maids on how to segregate wet and dry garbage and how to make compost pits. I cannot impose that, but I will espouse that."

Biggest decision

She says getting married was the biggest decision she has made in her life. She and her husband have been married for 50 years now. In November, they will celebrate their golden anniversary, not with a grand wedding but with a simple dinner party, she says. They scrapped an earlier plan to travel to seven Scandinavian countries.

Siguion-Reyna says she always lets her conscience rule even in the face of strong public opposition.

"That's the story of my life. I believe that when you occupy any position, you are not there to win a popularity contest. You are there to serve in whatever capacity within your judgment, beneficial to the most number of people. I don't regret anything I have done. What I regret are the things I didn't do."

She says she learned truthfulness and punctuality from her late father.

To people who look down on show biz people who enter politics, Siguion-Reyna says:

"No matter who you are, what is important is you are serious in your intention to serve the people. It doesn't matter whether you're a doctor, plumber, bold star, actor or comedian. It does not say in the Constitution that only a certain group of people can enter politics."

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Sundays at 9:00 pm beginning March 4
Heather Locklear sends City hall into a tailspin as Mike's sexy new nemesis, Caitlin Moore - Mayor Winston's campaign manager.

Mondays at 9:00 pm beginning March 5
Prue, Piper and Phoebe confront more potent and sinister evils as their powers increase. Meanwhile, Piper and Leo take their relationship a step further.

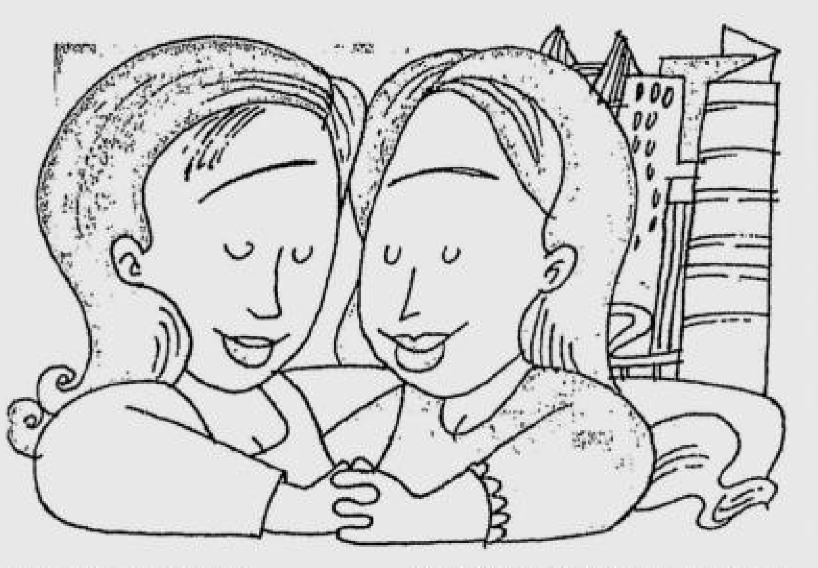
Mondays at 8:00 pm beginning March 19
Pacey and Joey return from their idyllic summer together, only to face not-so-idyllic realities, old conflicts and new responsibilities.

Tuesdays at 7:30 pm beginning March 20
Three new gorgeous lifeguards make a splash, Mitch and Neely find themselves single and available again, Craig returns for more action.

Saturdays at 7:30 pm beginning March 24
It's the start of a new school year. Matt takes up pre-med and Annie finishes up on her degree, while Mary decides to postpone college altogether!

‘Tomboy love’ among domestics in HK

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



"MOTHER, sister, lover, friend, companion and husband—everything good wrapped in one!"

This was how a Filipino domestic helper (DH) in Hong Kong described her partner in a same-sex relationship.

"Tomboy love" is flourishing in HK, reveals a study on sexuality and Filipino migrant workers by college professor Marilen Abesamis. Many Filipina maids in Hong Kong enter intimate relationships—heterosexual and homosexual—as a form of "daily resistance" or refusal to be dominated by oppressive forces and as a sign of resilience and creativity. The study titled "Romance and, Resistance: The Experience of Filipina Domestic Workers in Hong Kong" also breaks "the stereotypes of backward, passive or otherwise hyper-sexualized Filipinas" and shows this image to be "inaccurate in their lived realities in HK."

Abesamis asks: Are the Filipina domestic helpers concerned only with economic deprivation or are they also concerned with their emotional, psychological and sexual needs? How do they articulate their sexuality as a mode of resistance? Abesamis reveals that domestic helpers address "their sexuality for a variety of ends: for self-affirmation, pleasure, economic and social mobility and political ends." She adds that sexuality is not simply a biological or natural given but is also "a social construction played out within particular economic, social and political structures in history."

It is in the constrictive closing in of personal, emotional and psychological space that the Filipina domestic worker in HK plays out her sexuality as resistance. Through her body, she proves that she remains a person, not an object reduced to a role.

In 1999 Abesamis interviewed 21 Filipina workers in HK and four returnees in Manila. Each interview ranged from one to six hours. The interviewees, aged 22 to 52 had stayed in HK from two months to 12 years. She also interviewed seamen. Abesamis' study is a masteral requirement for her course in development studies in the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands.

Abesamis found out that topping the hierarchy of preferred mates "is the white, middle-class male, who has been socially constructed positively not only by a colonial experience but by a persistent flow of Hollywood images associating the white male with higher social class, a world of rights and 'freedoms' unattainable in the Filipinas' current status."

Below the white male are the South Asians who are considered "caring" like the Filipinos and financially generous but who are not highly esteemed by Filipino females in the Philippines.

Chinese men are not as desirable because of class and gender barriers and are seen as "looking down" on Filipinas and not as affectionate.

But same-sex relationships with fellow workers have become a preferred way, temporary or not. "Tomboyism" not lesbianism is how Abesamis calls the practice because the Filipinas prefer to use the word tomboy and not lesbian to refer to themselves or their female partners. For the women, tomboy could simply describe a behavior while lesbianism is more complex.

"One can be anything in HK," a domestic worker told Abesamis, "nobody really minds." Once the tomboys have come out, their acquaintances generally treat them with sympathy. "Oh, Juana, I didn't realize you've become a Juan," would be a friendly remark.

Abesamis categorizes the tomboys into three types: 1) those who had been known as tomboys in the Philippines and continued to exhibit the same lifestyle in Hong Kong and choose partners there, 2) the closeted ones while in the Philippines and who have come out in Hong Kong's relatively free environment, 3) those who have become attracted to and were initiated into tomboy practices only in HK.

While Abesamis admits that her sample is limited and therefore not a basis for generalizations, she sums up the women's reasons for tomboy relationships thus:

- A tomboy relationship is a "safe" way of expressing one's sexuality because there is no fear of getting pregnant. Sexuality is therefore completely divorced from reproduction. Shifting sexual identity seems an extreme way to avoid pregnancy, Abesamis notes, adding that the women she had interviewed may have had other unexpressed motivations.
- Tomboys are deemed "sensitive," "caring," and provide a sense of security more that any male in a heterosexual relationship can. Abesamis adds that this seeming idealization of tomboys is frequently done by those whose marriages had failed or who fear irresponsibility, lack of communication and infidelity of husbands in the Philippines.
- "For Hong Kong Only" is how such and other sex-affective relationships formed in HK are labeled. This is simply a response to the need for pleasure and intimacy. The "affair" is co-terminus with the work contract and once one leaves HK things would be "back to normal."
- Filipinas need intimate relationships with people of their own race, nationality and class because these partners would understand them best, but in HK there is little opportunity to meet Filipinos who will take them seriously.

Going "back to normal" is not always easy, Abesamis found out. The same-sex relationships frowned upon in the Philippines leave the women guilt-ridden and insecure. Said "Anna," a returned DH: "I don't know who I am, I think I am still a woman but I can no longer relate to my husband."

Anna was 36 when she left for HK, a desperate "act of revenge" caused by a philandering husband. She cited her sacrifices to make him happy by doing traditional wife roles—preparing his clothes, his toothbrush, his lunchbox, leaving her career to take care of three children.

HK meant freedom for Anna and getting involved with a tomboy was her way of getting back at her husband. It was also "safe" and gave her a "high" she never experienced before. She described her sexual encounter thus: "We thrilled and drowned in our emotions, so we swore never to do it again—that one thing—again." The experience left her shaken and guilt-ridden.

After two years, Anna went home because she could not bear leaving her children motherless for a long time. She has put the tomboy episode behind her because, she said, her identity is that of a mother first.

Abesamis concludes that the relaxation of traditional norms, the absence of a normal context of heterosexual pairing, the opportunities provided by the company of so many women, the relative autonomy created by a higher income and the loneliness and isolation in an unfamiliar culture—all these conspire to make tomboyism a less difficult choice in Hong Kong.

Abesamis says that for many, tomboy love helped them resist heterosexual relationships and even prostitution. She also points out that there are tomboy relationships that have survived and have been accepted by families back home. Some returned women have even separated from their husbands, taken custody of their children and set up a family with the person they came to love while they were in HK.

But heterosexual or homosexual relationships are not always the balm or answer to the needs of the Filipina DH in HK. For many "pleasure-seeking" outside of their commitments back home is not an option. "Self-talk" helps them cope. Here are some of the things the women say to themselves:

Keep busy. Keep focused on the work. It's a matter of controlling, disciplining oneself. Pray. Ward all temptation. Keep close to God and on the right track. Go to church, unburden there, it lightens everything. Friends—have fun with them, call them. Buy something special once in a while. Enjoy some wholesome entertainment. Remember the children, the family. Listen to their voice tapes. Phone the husband, the children.

But for many, better than nothing or no one, safer and more satisfying is "tomboy love." And for those who had no love to speak of even back home despite a husband, at least they could say "they found it in Hong Kong."

Police tell women to ‘be careful’

By Alcuin Papa

PARAÑAQUE City police yesterday warned young women to be careful and alert—especially when they go out at night—after the abduction, rape and killing of Claudine Feliciano and the near-kidnapping of another woman.

"We are asking young women to be careful, be vigilant and alert and to take the necessary precautionary measures (when they go out)," Parañaque Police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles told the **Inquirer**.

Estilles said imposing a curfew or banning young women from going out at nights was "not right" since this would curtail their individual freedom.

But police "are doing our best" to solve the killing of Feliciano, Estilles said.

He revealed that his office has received a lot of calls from anonymous tipsters who claim they know the suspects.

But the Parañaque police chief said they are checking on all possible leads and information that they can get.

Estilles said that police are trying to reconstruct and reenact the movements of Feliciano at the time of her abduction.

PNP chief Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza also ordered yesterday concerned units to "expedite" the investigation of Feliciano's death.

The Parañaque Criminal Investigation Division is working closely with the Southern Police District's Investigation and Intelligence Division and the Criminal Investigation Division in solving the crime.

He . . .

(From page A29)

A criminal lawyer by profession, Abalos claims there was a time that he almost gave up and told his father he did not want this kind of life. But now, Abalos is bent on solving the problems of the city, for at least six more years.

"My real dream for Mandaluyong is that in six years, we would be squatter-free. And we could do it."

But how would he free the city from its garbage problem, a festering issue everywhere in the metropolis?

"With discipline that would start with the people. What we try to do now is to emphasize segregation. We have done it in schools, and we have tried this in one barangay. The city itself purchased P400,000 worth of machines for composting-very expensive. But it was very successful.

"The ultimate goal for me (when it comes to garbage) is to set up a composting site in one of every three barangays."

Crime in the city, says Abalos, would be limited if he could buy more police cars, police radios, even if he thinks the budget for these should come from the coffers of the Philippine National Police.

He says he also gives the police force in the city allowances and incentives from the city's coffers. He has also retained a lawyer to represent policemen in case they are accused of harassment on the job, Abalos adds.

He still has many plans, but Abalos claims that to be elected to a higher office is not one of them. One thing, however, is sure, he says.

"I will always be a human being."

15 Filipinas rescued from Ivory Coast sex den

By TJ Burgonio

FIFTEEN young Filipino women are finally out of Africa.

Philippine embassy officials in Ivory Coast, West Africa, rescued the women, aged 19 to 28, from a nightclub where they were forced to have sex with foreigners without pay for months.

The women arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport aboard an Air France flight Tuesday night.

Visibly scarred from their experience, they vowed never to leave the country again and would look for jobs here; immigration officer Jun Labindalawa said.

The Philippine embassy in Abuja, Nigeria issued emergency travel certificates to the women to facilitate travel from Ivory Coast to Manila.

The women, some of whom came from Northern Samar, Albay, Pampanga and Tondo, were treated as sex slaves at the Egyptian-run Philippine-Thailand Club in the Ivory Coast capital of Abidjan, Labindalawa said.

The immigration officer said an Egyptian runs the club, so called because it employed mostly Filipino and Thai women.

Early this month, four of the women escaped from the bar with the help of their customers. They reported the sad plight of other Filipinas to the Philippine embassy in Abidjan.

Alarmed by the report, embassy officials sought the help of Ivory Coast authorities and raided the bar to rescue the 11 other Filipinas.

At that time, the Egyptian club owner, Gabar Rehab, was not around during the raid. Two other Filipinas were not rescued because one was transferred to another club while a foreigner took home the other.

A Filipina recruited the women to work as guest relations officers overseas and promised each of them $300 pay plus $50 allowance a month.

The women did not pay anything and were flown in batches to Abidjan between April and December last year, Labindalawa said.

A month into their work as GROs, they were shocked to learn that the promise of high pay was a sham. Worse, they were forced to go out often with foreign customers "to meet their quota of 12 bottles of whisky every month," he said.

Under that scheme, every bottle that a customer buys from the club is credited to the GRO of his choice. The customers, mostly French and Lebanese, had to buy a bottle of whisky for $100, because that's the only way they could bring the women out.

If they failed to meet the quota, the women were fined equivalent to the remaining unsold bottles of whisky.

The club owner did not regularly pay them, but he did give them small amounts for their personal use while customers gave them tips, Labindalawa said.

After work, each of the women was locked up in a room. A closed-circuit system also monitored their every move inside the club.

Their chances of escape were slim except when they go out with their customers.

This month, four of them got a break. They agreed to go out and have sex with their customers without any tip on the condition that they help them escape. The customers agreed.

In July 2000, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women reported that 50,000 to 70,000 women, most of them from Southeast Asia, are trafficked each year throughout the world.

About 50 percent of these women are Filipinos.

Aguilar, Bustamante lauded for pro-women projects

THE 25,000-strong Kalipunan ng Liping Pilipina hailed reelectionist Las Piñas City Mayor Vergel Aguilar and Vice Mayor Louie Bustamante for implementing various pro-women projects in the city.

One of Aguilar's projects which earned the praise of women is the free and total health care program which has benefited thousands of poor city residents.

With the construction of 27 modern and fully equipped health centers, a free child delivery service at the modern Las Piñas City Lying In Clinic and free hospitalization at the San Juan de Dios Hospital, the Aguilar administration also earned the recognition of other local and national organizations.

The Department of Health presented the Sentrong Sigla award to the city government for its outstanding implementation of a pro-poor health program and for having the best health facilities in the country.

Aguilar assured Kalipi members he would continue to pursue pro-women projects, focusing on livelihood training and personality enhancement development seminars—programs that would help alleviate women's conditions.

Mel T. Aguilar, Kalipi chair and wife of the mayor, called on women in the city to avail of the special health services and treatment offered by the city health office, in celebration of International Women's Day this month.

The city health office provides free checkup for women such as Pap smear procedure for early cervical cancer detection and self-breast examination for early breast cancer detection and prevention.

Fresnedi relies on his record

REELECTIONIST Muntinlupa Mayor Jaime Fresnedi believed his untarnished track record as public official and sincerity to serve the poor are the qualities that would put him back in office in the May elections.

Fresnedi cited the effectivity of his eight-point program of governance, which he hoped would improve the lives of his constituents.

The mayor has aggressively campaigned to promote the quality of education in the city.

"Education tops my priority because I believe good education produces better people who can avail themselves of quality jobs and a more pleasant kind of living," he said.

Fresnedi has pushed for the construction of additional school buildings and classrooms and rehabilitation of school facilities such as libraries.

He said almost 200 computers had been distributed to the 14 public schools in the city, aside from printers, television sets and textbooks.

Recently, the city government awarded college scholarships to 10 students, each of whom would receive P25,000 every semester plus allowance and other perks.

The near completion of the 150-bed Ospital ng Muntinlupa also boosted the mayor's health program.

The hospital will provide free medication to poor city residents.

Also, top surgeons from abroad joined a surgical and medical mission and performed free minor and major operations on some ailing residents, at a portion of the hospital.

Fresnedi hailed the city police for its anti-drug abuse campaign which earned for the local police three top awards.

The local police force also earned a high crime solution efficiency rate.

The mayor has donated motorcycles and mobile cars to promote law enforcers' efficiency in the performance of their duties.

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

My rival dreaming, says Bong Revilla

CAVITE Gov. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. dismissed the claims of Erineo "Ayong" Maliksi that he was leading in a survey.

"He is desperate," Revilla said. "He is resorting to absurdities and the unthinkable."

Revilla added that Maliksi's figures were culled from an unknown Makati firm.

In a recent survey conducted by the Social Weather Station (SWS), Revilla was ahead with 68 percent, while Erineo Maliksi trailed with 29 percent, putting the lie to Maliksi's claims that he was ahead 52-49.

"How can he take the lead when all Caviteños know his caliber and unclean record," Revilla said. "It's not bad to daydream, but what is bad is to tell a lie and to fool people."

Revilla, who is running under the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP party, recently unveiled the Cavite Vision 2020, his 20-year development plan for the province.

The SWS said Revilla chalked 63 percent against Maliksi's 31 in the first district. Maliksi also trailed Revilla 29 to 71 in the second district, and 25 to 70 in the third district.

Among the ABC group, Revilla got 71 over Maliksi's 26, 69 to 29 in the D group, and 64 to 31 in the E group.

Revilla got 69 percent against Maliksi's 29 percent in the male category while he got 68 percent against Maliksi's 29 in the female category.

Revilla also garnered 75 percent among the 18-24 age bracket, 72 percent in the 25-34 bracket, 67 percent in the 35-44 group, and 62 percent in the 45 and above group.

Also, 79 percent of new residents approved of Revilla. He also enjoyed 79 percent approval of the 8-20 year residents; 63 percent of the 21-35 year residents and 59 percent of 36-year residents and above.

The survey was based on preferences for governor of Cavite by location, locale, class, gender, age group and years of Cavite residency.

LAS PIÑAS' Jonelta Indigent Foundation Inc., a charity organization founded by philanthropist Tony Tamayo, recently received financial assistance for its continuing medical missions from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). UPHRMC vice president for administration Menchu S. Tamayo (right) receives the check in behalf of the Jonelta Foundation from PCSO chair Ma. Livia "Honeygirl" S. de Leon (left). Jonelta, through Tamayo's leadership, has served more than 42,000 families in health care, educational and livelihood programs.

David vs Goliath in Mandaluyong

MANDALUYONG City mayoral candidate Ernesto "Bibot" Domingo has likened his opponent, incumbent Mayor Benhur Abalos Jr., to the biblical character Goliath whom a David such as himself has to beat.

But Domingo, a supporter of deposed President Joseph Estrada, said Abalos is only a formidable opponent in so far as machinery and logistics are concerned.

"If we would have clean, fair and honest elections, I think I have a 50-percent chance of winning," Domingo said. "(Abalos and his camp) are only Goliaths in terms of power and machinery."

This is the second time Domingo is facing Abalos in the mayoral race in Mandaluyong. He is running side by side with actor Phillip Salvador, who is also a supporter of Estrada.

Domingo said the fact that he did not join the Edsa People Power 2 would not really affect his campaign.

He said he prides himself in his supposedly being identified with the masses, claiming that the poverty-stricken Welfareville Village and other poor parts of the city are his bailiwick.

He said he believes that about 70 percent of the Mandaluyong voters, who belong to the lower economic class, would support him. He predicted that of the total number of voters, only about 110,000 would actually vote.

Domingo, who lost to Abalos by around 8,000 votes in 1998, said it was the vote of the Iglesia ni Cristo bloc which won for Abalos the mayoralty.

Agnes E. Donato

The party list system: for the marginalized

BY KUH LEDESMA

THE Party-List System Act is a noble attempt to give the unrepresented or under-represented sectors of society a voice in Congress. These sectors are labor, peasant (or farmers), urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, the elderly, the handicapped, women, the youth, overseas workers, fisherfolk, veterans and professionals.

The "marginalized" actually make up a large part of the Philippine population. This is why I prefer to call them "under-represented."

The system was first implemented in the 1998 elections. The traditional major political parties were not allowed to run under the party-list system because it was assumed that the senatorial and provincial congressional candidates voted into office already represented these parties.

However, the traditional parties are now allowed by law to run as party-list candidates in the May elections. In 1998, the Commission on Elections accepted 120 parties to run under the party-list system.

This year, 213 have registered, so the competition is tough.

Twenty percent of the seats in Congress, or 52 seats, are allotted for party-list representatives. Each party-list can win up to three seats in Congress, so a total of 17 parties can win the optimum number of seats.

To win one seat, the party must garner 2 percent of total party-list votes. In 1998, only around 35 percent of voters voted for a party-list so to win one seat, a party had to win only around 200,000 votes. The most seats a party won last elections were two.

It is estimated that more voters this elections will vote party-list because the populace is more aware of the system. So an estimated 400,000 votes will be required to win one seat in Congress.

Not only is it critical to vote for a party-list in May to give voice to the under-represented sectors, but selecting which party-list to vote for.

For example, why would you vote for the traditional parties which are not only over-represented in the government but will evidently try to drown out the voices of the smaller parties that truly represent the marginalized sectors of society. Voting for a traditional party would undermine the noble spirit behind the party-list system.

LEDESMA and husband Louie Quirino Gonzales with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Pinatubo Party is a candidate for party-list, representing the urban poor, farmers and fisher olk. The name Pinatubo means "grown" or "nurtured" from below and the essence of our platform is really development from below, or from poor households.

The name "Pinatubo" also counters the predominant system of development which is "pinatulo" or "trickle down" which has been the approach of past and current administrations.

The trickle-down system assumes that if big business prospers, the benefits will trickle down to the poor in jobs and other secondary benefits.

The fact is this is not happening. Our group has been giving workshops to poor households on the Pinatubo platform. You ask the poor if they felt any improvement in their household incomes since Marcos and they give you an apathetic stare. We name each president that has been in power and the poor answer, "Mahirap pa rin."

IBOTO PINATUBO PARTY LIST

Even when we tell them GNP increased by 4 percent it did not impact on their daily struggle to feed the family, find each day the P20 to send their children to school, pay back their loan to the five/six money lenders.

What the poor seek is security so they can think beyond today.

Aggravating poverty

Not only has the pinatulo approach been ineffective, it aggravates poverty because all resources, capital, government infrastructure, people skills goes to supporting export-oriented companies rather than supporting agricultural livelihood. So we have the exodus to the cities and the growing ranks of urban squatters, dwindling natural resources, fishing grounds with no more fish, 20 percent of forest left, and all the catastrophic consequences of the pinatulo system.

The Pinatubo system seeks to channel government and business resources back to the communities in order to build a local production base. Only when we have a sound local production base can we be competitive in the international market.

How do we do this? We involve communities in planning their social and economic needs such as dryers, irrigation, processing facilities, training for diversified crops and environmentally sustainable practices.

In urban areas, they identify what small businesses they need to spend more within their barangays, social needs such as schools, health care, help for drug addicts, birth control. Once they have a plan, we can identify where they need the capital to implement this plan. Then local governments have a reason to build roads, schools, clinics, post-harvest facilities and the like.

Small investments to support existing livelihood and necessary businesses initiate self-help activities and local trade within their barangays. Then we can expand to trade between barangays, between cities and provinces. Large companies can then identify which communities can serve as a production base for their goods.

In this way, we build local production and are not dependent on the volatility of export markets.

Vote for a party-list that you think will represent the voice of the under-represented majority.

'Monkey King' on Hallmark Channel

HALLMARK Channel presents "The Monkey King," a two-night big-event presentation about one man's quest to find and rescue a famous Chinese manuscript from a group of demons.

Directed by Peter MacDonald, "The Monkey King" premieres tomorrow, March 18, 9:30 p.m.

Based on the well-loved 16th century Chinese literature classic journey to the west by Cheng-En Wu, "The Monkey King" illustrates Hallmark Channel's award-winning trademark, blending a timeless adventure story, unforgettable characters, dazzling special effects and a cast to provide excellent entertainment to its global audience.

Headlining the cast are Thomas Gibson, Russell Wong and Bai Ling.

"The Monkey King" also features fantastical martial arts effects that will thrill its audience. As the adventurers journey to the underworld to rescue the legendary manuscript and do battle with evil forces, their dazzling display of energy is aided by the award-winning special-effects company Cinesite, which created the eye-popping effects in films like "Animal Farm" and "Mission Impossible 2."

The Hallmark Channel is seen on Home Cable's Channel 53 and SkyCable's Channel 38.

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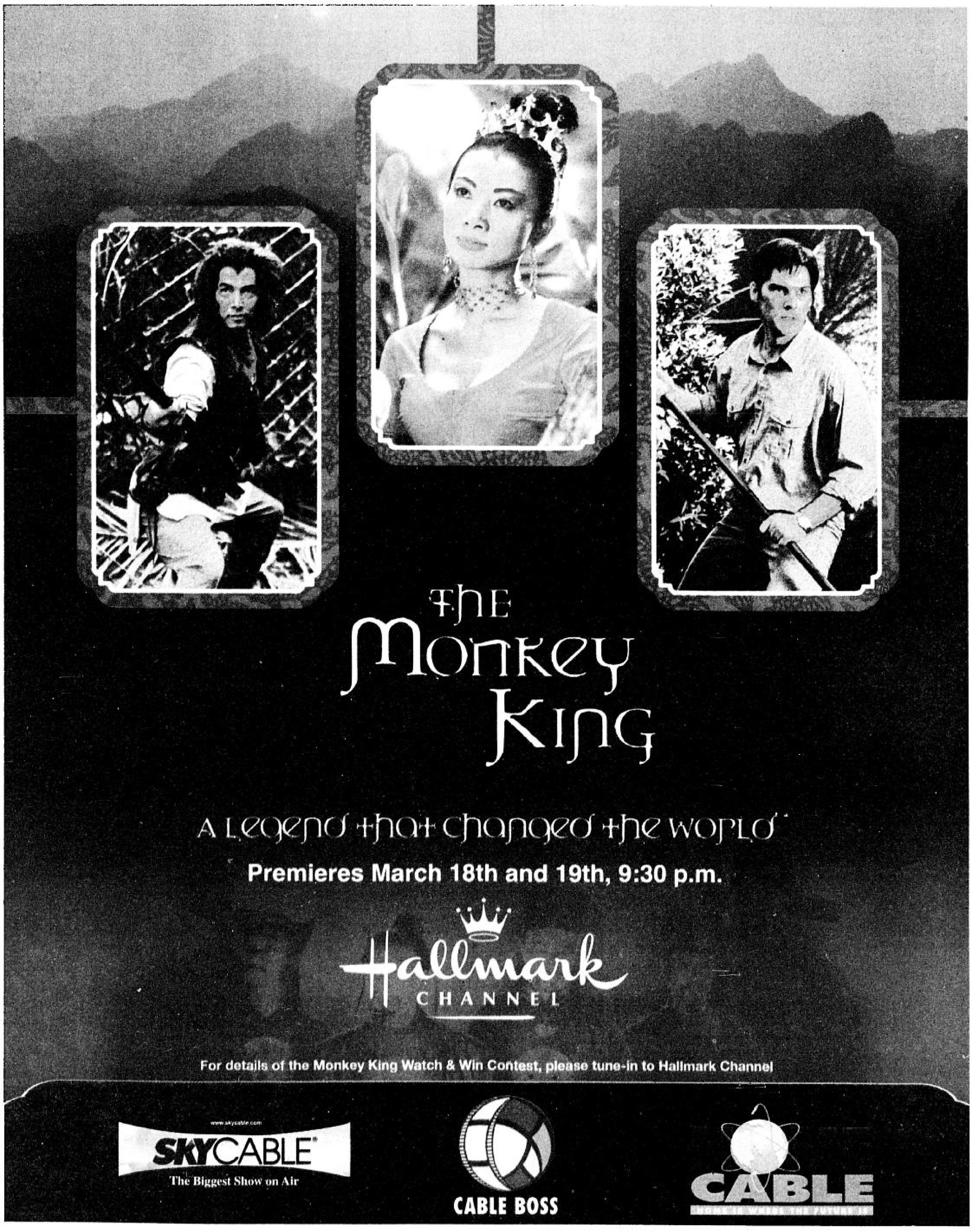

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	DOLBY SURROUND	HOSTAGE
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVESHOW
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	DRACULA 2000
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
8	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
SM CENTERPOINT	7149522 • 7161416	
1	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
3	DTS	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
7	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
8	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HOSTAGE
SM CITY FAIRVIEW	9350749	
1	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
2	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL
3	DOLBY SURROUND	HOSTAGE
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
8	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
9	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
10	DOLBY SURROUND	ALMOST FAMOUS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
12	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
SM CITY MANILA	5239240	
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	DRACULA 2000
3	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
4	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	BILLY ELLIOT
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HANNIBAL
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
9	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
10	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
11	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
12	DOLBY SURROUND	ALMOST FAMOUS
GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR	8820950	
1	ULTRA SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
SM MEGAMALL	6331901 • 6329401	
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	DRACULA 2000
2	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
4	DTS	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
5	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
SM CITY NORTH EDSA	9295452	
1	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
2	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
5	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
7	DTS	MS. CONGENIALITY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HOSTAGE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
12	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL
SM SOUTHMALL	8066888 • 8066792	
1	ULTRA SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
5	ULTRA SURROUND	HOSTAGE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
7	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	WEDDING PLANNER
9	ULTRA SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
10	ULTRA SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
TUTUBAN CENTER	2514302	
1	ULTRA SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LIVESHOW
SM CEBU	2313876	
1	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
2	ULTRA SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CONTENDER
4	ULTRA SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
5	ULTRA SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
7	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
SM ILOILO	3209422	
1	ULTRA SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	HANNIBAL
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
5	ULTRA SURROUND	WOMEN ON TOP
6	ULTRA SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
7	ULTRA SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
8	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CONTENDER
SM PAMPANGA	7126015	
1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	DRACULA 2000
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	ALMOST FAMOUS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOOPS, TEKA LANG

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2 WEDDING PLANNER in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 WEDDING PLANNER THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 CHUCK & BUCK (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film
5 HANNIBAL in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 MS. CONGENIALITY in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 BILLY ELLIOT in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1 BILLY ELLIOT in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 WEDDING PLANNER in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 MS. CONGENIALITY in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
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3 MS. CONGENIALITY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 HANNIBAL in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 OOOPS, TEKA LANG... DISKARTE KO TO! in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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MOVIE GUIDE

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2 (SDDS) PURPLE STORM
3 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
4 GOLD (DTS) HANNIBAL
5 GOLD (DOLBY) DRACULA 2000
6 GOLD (SDDS) BILLY ELLIOT
7 GOLD (DOLBY) WEDDING PLANNER
8 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
9 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
10 TOO MUCH FLESH

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 TOROTOT
3 (DTS) OBJECT OF OBSESSION
4
5
6 (DTS) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 (DTS)
3

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 LIVE SHOW

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(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PURPLE STORM
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4 LIVE SHOW
5 WEDDING PLANNER
6 RESERVE
7 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
8 TOO MUCH FLESH

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1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
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3 HAYOP SA GANDA
4 SPACE COWBOY
5 –
6

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
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3 SPACE COWBOY
4 WONDER BOY

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1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 VITAL PART

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515
1
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 TOROTOT

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
A TOROTOT

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 TUHOG

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8568
1 (DOLBY) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
4 LIVE SHOW
5 PURPLE STORM
6 TOO MUCH FLESH
7 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
8 (SDDS) WEDDING PLANNER
9 (DOLBY) DRACULA 2000

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOO MUCH FLESH
4 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4 (SDDS) WEDDING PLANNER
5 TOO MUCH FLESH
6 (DOLBY) HOSTAGE
7 (DTS) KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKA
8 TOROTOT
9 PURPLE STORM

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) WEDDING PLANNER
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 HOSTAGE
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
5 (SDDS) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
6 LIVE SHOW
7 (DOLBY) PURPLE STORM
8 TOO MUCH FLESH

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 LIVE SHOW
2 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKA
3 (DTS) WEDDING PLANNER
4 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
5 (SDDS) TOO MUCH FLESH
6 (DOLBY) DRACULA 2000
7 (DOLBY) OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson LIVE SHOW
Lords TOO MUCH FLESH
Jennet OOOPS, TEKA LANG

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 TOROTOT
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 TOO MUCH FLESH
4 LIVE SHOW

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 DRACULA 2000
3 WEDDING PLANNER
4 LIVE SHOW
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 MASARAP PERO MASAKIT
4 PURPLE STORM
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
6 LIVE SHOW

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
3 (DTS) MS CONGENIALITY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 (DTS) ALMOST FAMOUS
3 (DOLBY) MS CONGENIALITY
4 DRACULA 2000

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 TOO MUCH FLESH
3 OBJECT OF OBSESSION
4 (DTS) OOOPS TEKA LANG

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 (DTS) MS CONGENIALITY
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
5 OBJECT OF OBSESSION

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 MS CONGENIALITY

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 MS CONGENIALITY

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 LIVE SHOW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 MS CONGENIALITY
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 DEMON GATE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) OOOPS, TEKA LANG
2 (DTS) LIVE SHOW

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 OOOPS TEKA LANG

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 BLONDIE
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 LIVE SHOW

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 LIVE SHOW
2 HANNIBAL
3 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Berma
tel 879.2188
1
2

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 OOOPS TEKA LANG

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) LIVE SHOW
2 OOOPS, TEKA LANG
3 HANNIBAL
4 (DTS EX) ALMOST FAMOUS

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Margie Holmes comes with two more books

POPULAR psychologist, columnist and radio show host Dr. Margarita Holmes lets loose her trademark thought-provoking and research-backed advice on sex and sexuality in her latest books "Babaeng Palaban" and "Lalaking Barako" which will be launched today at 6 p.m. at Powerbooks on Pasay Road, Makati City.

The launch highlight will be responses from noted personalities like columnist Mon Tulfo, actors Lito Legaspi and Bernardo Bernardo, and performances by Peta actors and singer Noel Cabangon. Holmes' friends Patis Tesoro and Ado Escudero will be the emcees.

In "Babaeng Palaban," Holmes not only gives advice and facts to women on premarital sex, date rape, virginity and marital infidelity but also allows room for the readers to think and decide for themselves.

"Lalaking Barako" tackles issues like penile size and shape, premature ejaculation and other issues raised by male readers.

Holmes is the author of the best-selling books "Life, Love, Lust," "Passion, Power, Pleasure," "A Different Love," "Bad, Bold and Brazen," "Wild, Wicked and Wonderful" and "Magtanong Kay Dra. Holmes," "Buhay Babae," "Buhay Lalake," "Buhay Single" and "Buhay May Asawa."

She was associate professor at the De La Salle University, the University of the Philippines and the University of North Carolina.

Joker needs volunteers

THE JOKER Arroyo for Senator Movement (JASM) youth volunteers are inviting young painters to join them as they make original handpainted streamers for Arroyo today starting at 10 a.m. Venue is the JASM headquarters, 2nd floor, 131 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City.

All other JASM volunteers will also meet at 2 p.m. today at the same place.

For more information, please call 638-8238; 638-8249; 638-8257; 638-8262; 638-8241; 638-8244; 638-8252; 638-8259; and 638-8263.

Roco goes to Naga

EDUCATION Secretary Raul S. Roco is the commencement speaker at the graduation exercise of the Basic Education Department of Colegio de Sta. Isabel, Naga City, today at 4 p.m.

Roco will discuss the graduation theme, "Socially Responsible Citizens-Backbone of a Nation's Stability."

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	DRACULA 2000
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	BILLY ELLIOT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	PURPLE STORM
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	TOO MUCH FLESH
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	OOOPS, TEKA LANG
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NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
MIRAMAR	KANGKONG/VIVID
ODEON	OOOPS TEKA LANG
ODEON-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
ROBEN	TOROTOT
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	HIGHLANDER / LOST SOUL
QUEZON CITY	
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ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	OOOPS TEKA LANG
QUEZON-1	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
REMAR	OOOPS TEKA LANG
REMAR-2	TOROTOT
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	LIVE SHOW
OCEAN CINEMA-A	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
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MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79/633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-2	DRACULA 2000
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
CINEMA-3	LIVE SHOW
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CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HANNIBAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ALMOST FAMOUS
CINEMA-12	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-14	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-15	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
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BENHUR ABALOS

He dreams of making Mandaluyong squatter-free

(These profiles kick off Metro's series on the Metro Manila candidates in the May 14 elections. The candidates are presented in random order, since they are interviewed—with exactly the same set of questions—according to their availability. May they help Metro Manila voters in choosing their leaders. – Editor)

BY NINI VALERA

HE'S YOUNG, he's driven and he's running for reelection. Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos is also his father's son.

"That's the trouble with being a junior…there's that challenge for you to follow in your father's footsteps," says Abalos, 38, son of current Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair and former Mandaluyong Mayor Benjamin Abalos, whose shoes Junior is trying on for size.

And, says Junior, his father's shoes are "a big space to fill up."

But the young Abalos, who's also known as Benhur, is not about to toss in the garbage bin his father's footwear—he has enough problems with Mandaluyong's garbage. He has vowed instead to fit into the shoes of the senior Abalos and live up to his namesake's achievements in the running game of local politics.

Running for a second term as Mandaluyong mayor under Lakas and the People Power Coalition, the junior Abalos, who was called Boyet before he became Benhur, is right behind the political heels of the older Abalos, whom he admits has shaped what he is today: a lawyer-turned-public servant.

He is standing on a campaign theme of "continuance of good governance," which is being transparent and getting people involved through consultation.

"In implementing projects, the people must be with you."

But Abalos also admits that he consults his father when he has problems in his office.

"When I feel I really need guidance, especially when it deals with public life, I go to him and seek his advice. But there are times when I was very vocal and he was very vocal, and my mom had to be called in to harmonize our ideas. He shaped my character like that—to be independent, but at the same time to be respectful of elders.

"Ever since I was a child, I was wondering, while I sat on his lap why this person, my father, was being respected by people older than he. In a session, a person would take his hand and press it to his forehead.

"So, that became the question in me. And (now) I know there's one thing money cannot buy and that is respect."

His own man

Recently, Abalos was upset when he was quoted to have compared a movie star now running as Mandaluyong vice mayor of the opposition to deposed President Estrada as having children with mistresses.

"I never said those words," Abalos maintains. "For me, his personal life is not an issue that should be dealt with in this election. If ever, (the issues should be) one's style of government. And most importantly, his qualifications and his capacity to serve the public.

"It's not for me to judge anyone on the basis of his personal relationships. I don't want to be on a moral high ground. I'm not that kind of person."

But he stands tall when he talks of his achievements during his first term as mayor of Mandaluyong, which has a voting population of roughly 185,000. He claims, among other major achievements, that despite the financial crisis, he has increased the city's revenue by P100 million.

"On record, we have about P1.016 billion, the highest revenue ever recorded in the history of Mandaluyong. This was from about P41 million from the time my father took over, which was about 12 or 13 years ago. So it has been a phenomenal leap from then on."

HE DREAMS/A26

ABALOS

SIGUION-REYNA

ARMIDA SIGUION-REYNA

'Going against strong public opinion is the story of my life'

BY LEAH SALTERIO

CALL her Armida or "Aawitan Kita."

These are the official nicknames that former censors chief and film producer Armida Siguion-Reyna registered with the Commission on Elections when she filed her candidacy for congresswoman of Makati's 1st District.

Known among show biz people as "Tita Midz," Siguion-Reyna first became known for her soprano turns on TV's long-running musical program, "Aawitan Kita," which she also produces.

She is convinced the program gives her a big edge in her political venture, even against her opponent, newspaper publisher-editor and TV host Teddy Boy Locsin.

"I may not get kissed or mobbed like Nora Aunor or Vilma Santos, but I believe the people of Makati know me better than they do Teddy Boy," she says.

She says she and Locsin are not like other political opponents who resort to mudslinging. She says Locsin is a close family friend of her daughter Monique Villonco, and they used to have dinner at least once a month.

"We're both clean," she says of herself and Locsin. "We are not going to throw mud at each other."

She likes to think of the voters of Makati's 1st district as intellectual people with a lot of understanding and big hearts.

"They will scrutinize my personality, not my acquaintances, my enemies or friends," she says. "If I put myself in their shoes, I will ask, 'What's her track record? When she fights, does she finish the battle till the end'?"

She decided to go into politics after she served as chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB).

"I'm 70 years old. I'm not doing anything much anymore. I cannot travel the whole year. I have to do something worthwhile."

Her husband, lawyer Leonardo Siguion-Reyna, was initially against her joining politics. Even her children objected to it.

Money or wife

"But my husband is important because he will finance my campaign. He told me to just go back to producing movies. But I told him, 'Dad, you will spend the same amount of money with Carlitos (Siguion-Reyna, their son) as director.'

"Besides, I cannot produce movies for at least a year after my tenure at MTRCB. Then I said, 'What do you prefer, lose money or lose a wife?' End of story. That's just like saying that I wanted it badly."

Siguion-Reyna has lived in Makati for 37 years now. She is a resident of Forbes Park but points out that she grew up in a barrio in Malabon. She thinks that part of her life helped shape her into a better person.

"I was not born in Forbes Park. I grew up in Maysilo in Malabon, although I will not say that

GOING/ A25

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Glorietta 4 12:00 mn
Greenbelt 11:30 p.m.

BILLY ELLIOT (PG-13)
Alabang Town Center 11:15 p.m.
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BILLY ELLIOT - P 13 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30	MISS CONGENIALITY - G 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
PAY IT FORWARD - P 13 11:40, 2:15, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50	HANNIBAL - R 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00, 11:00

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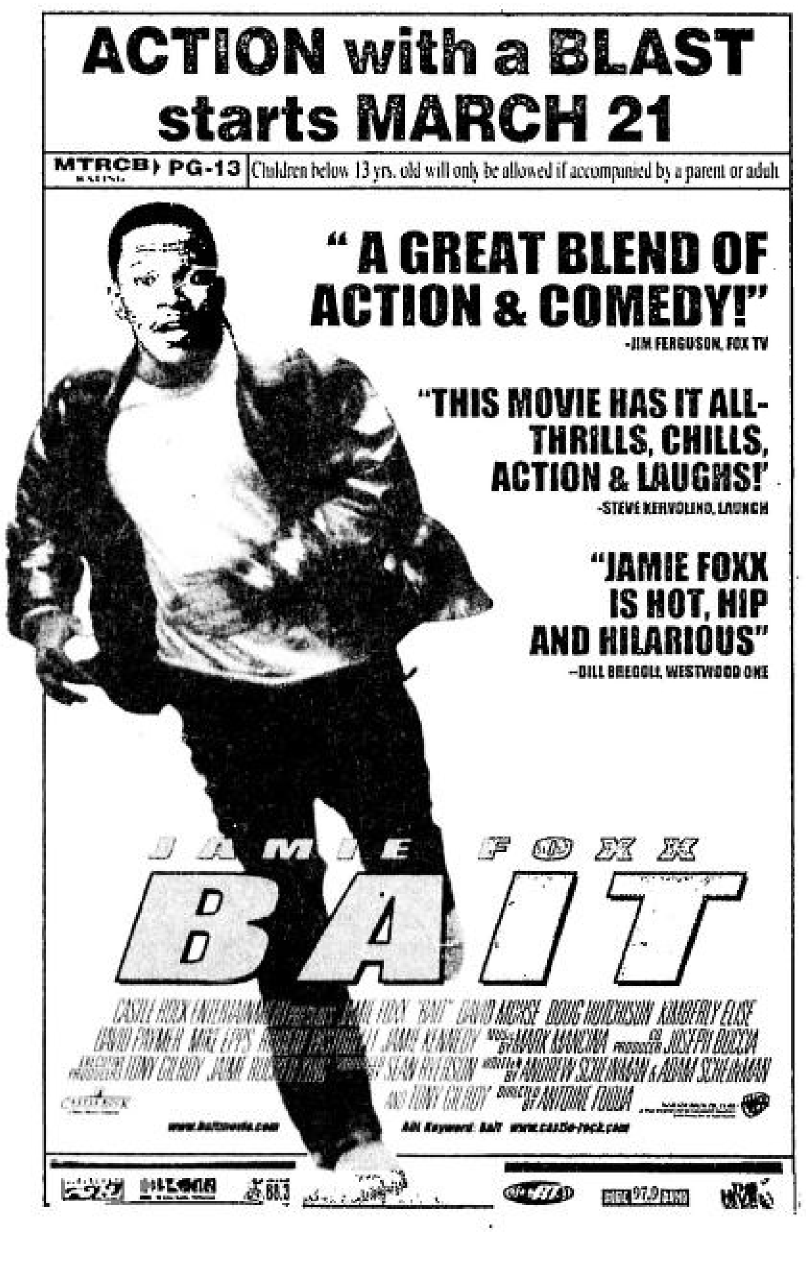
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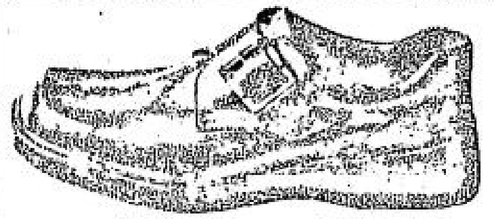

The Bristol Shoe

Jobless rate hit 11.4% in January

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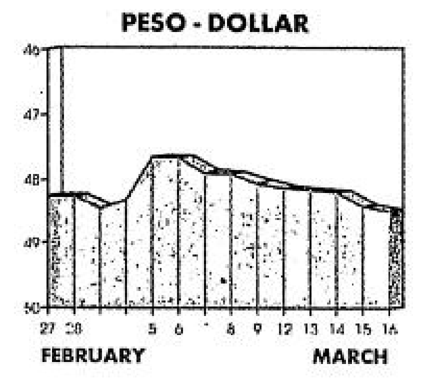

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March 16, 2001

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The US dollar was trading at 122.56 as of 5 p.m., March 16, 2001

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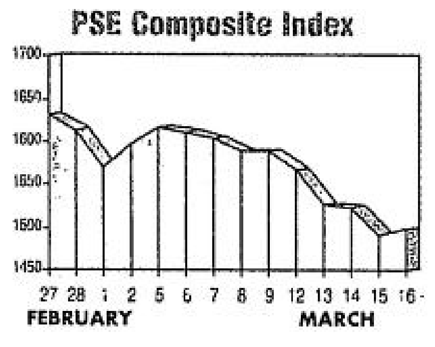
STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks up

SHARES yesterday closed higher for the first time in almost two weeks as some local investors took advantage of bargain stocks.

But the market's gains were not too convincing as it was accompanied by meager volume, indicating that cautiousness among investors remained.

The 33-share composite index added 6.71 points, or 0.45 percent, to end at 1,498.32 points. The index was in positive territory for the entire session.

Despite the gains, the main index lost 90.07 points, or 5.67 percent, for the week, mirroring the sharp losses on Wall Street. *Reuters*

By Doris C. Dumlao

UNEMPLOYMENT rate in the Philippines rose to a nine-month high of 11.4 percent in January this year as the fragile economy failed to create enough opportunities to cope with the expanding labor force.

The surge in the unemployment rate to a double-digit level from 9.5 percent in the same period in 2000 was also attributed to the effect of seasonal agriculture jobs, the National Statistics Office said.

NSO, which comes out with labor statistics on a quarterly basis (January, April, July and October), reported that the number of jobless Filipinos went up by 698,000 or 24 percent. In its last quarterly report in October, the NSO reported an unemployment rate of 10.1 percent.

The agency said there were 1.05 million Filipinos that entered the labor force but a number of them were not able to find jobs as of January. The decline in agricultural employment by 370,000 further compounded the country's unemployment woes during the period.

The statistics office said the country's total labor force in January reached 31.68 million, up 2.6 percent from 30.9 million in October and 3.6 percent more than the 30.6 million registered in the year-ago month. Of the total, 88.6 percent was registered employed but 16.9 percent of which was considered underemployed or working less than their full potentials.

Data showed that the economy generated 354,000 new jobs in the 12 months to January, far slower than the 1.05 million increase in the labor force.

Bankers Association of the Philippines senior economist Marjo Elevado said the unemployment trend seen since last year should be a concern for both the public and private sectors. Excluding the April figures, which were seasonally high because of the surge in fresh college graduates, Elevado said the January 2001 unemployment rate was the highest since 1988.

"Unemployment figures reached critical levels. We've seen some changes in the trend. For instance, the country's labor force always increases every year, but for the first time in 2000, it shrank," she said.

"We're looking at improvements, maybe by the second semester. We can't expect to see the impact of the improved economic environment immediately," she said. "Particular focus must be made on job creation in the National Capital Region and Southern Luzon."

Out of the 16 regions in the country, nine regions posted a double-digit unemployment rate with Metro Manila posting the highest of 18 percent. It was followed by Southern Tagalog (12.6 percent), Central Visayas (12.4 percent), Central Luzon (12.2 percent), Ilocos Region (10.8 percent), Western Visayas (10.6 percent), Eastern Visayas (10.3 percent), Central

JOBLESS/ B6

Gov't, Tan OK PNB sale next month

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration and taipan Lucio Tan have agreed to jointly sell their stakes in Philippine National Bank, equivalent to more than 80 percent of the bank, next month at a "more realistic price."

"We are trying to get it done before April," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters yesterday. He added that the bank's rehabilitation would be taken up with PNB's prospective new owners.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo said he has no objection with the planned bundled sale next month "if this is what the central bank and the Tan group have agreed upon."

Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. president Norberto Nazareno, however, said the timetable might not be "too realistic" considering that the parties have yet to forge a formal agreement on the joint sale.

Buenaventura said the selling price for the combined stakes of the government and Tan would definitely be lower than the previous asking price of P160 per share, which prospective buyers found too high.

"We'll have no objection on whatever position that the BSP and PDIC will adopt. I am waiting for the final report," said Romulo.

The government still has a 16-percent stake in PNB, down from 30.4 percent prior to the stock rights offering. Tan controls PNB with 67 percent.

Nazareno said the combined stakes of the government and Tan amounted to about P17.4 billion. He said the government and Tan hold 370 million shares worth P17.4 billion at its current price of P47 per share.

"We want to work out something within this month. We don't want a protracted sale like what had happened last year. But I'm not sure if April is realistic," said the PDIC chief.

PDIC also said it was currently finalizing the list of government loans that PNB wanted to transfer to PDIC.

PDIC is also open to discounting its loans to PNB but the buyer would have to assume the responsibility over the bank's obligations to the bank insurer.

"I think Mr. Tan is serious in selling this time," said Nazareno who pointed out that the joint sale proposal came from the taipan's camp.

In June last year, Tan and the government tried to sell their respective stakes of 46 percent and 30.4 percent plus about 4 percent from the PNB Retirement Fund for a total of 80 percent.

Tan wanted to sell his stake last year for P160 per share at a time when PNB shares were trading below P80. As a result, the bidding failed.

In a stock rights offering last September, Tan infused into the bank P10 billion in capital raising his stake to more than 70 percent while that of the government was diluted to only about 16 percent.

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Shame as above

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

LUCIO Tan gets no choice at all from this cute administration of Gloriaetta. He must sell out of the Philippine National Bank. He has no choice, because the move makes for good politics. For Gloriaetta!

Last I heard, Lucio Tan may have already softened his stand. Now he agrees to sell his interest in PNB, which actually commands control of the bank. But on one condition! He demands that the sale must allow him to bear only several hundred millions of pesos in losses. There, take it or leave it!

Word earlier was, Lucio Tan sulked over the same sale as above. In a surprise yet brilliant move, the Department of Finance decided to sell Lucio Tan's private interest in the bank. It was so surprising, in fact, it even surprised the likes of Lucio Tan himself. Word went around that Lucio Tan got mad. Maybe he never liked surprises.

More likely, though, it's because the government just made a brilliant decision alone by itself involving somebody else's money. It could only put Lucio Tan back a few billions of pesos. Good move! Nobody in, uhm, "civil society" likes the man, anyway.

* * *

MORE importantly, the government could never hope to get a good price for its PNB shares. It was a bit puzzling. Actually, the government shares still commanded full control of the shrubs in the bank's compound at the reclaimed area on Roxas Boulevard.

To raise the selling price for the government shares, Finance decided that the buyers must pay a premium. This, unfortunately, was only possible if the buyers were getting the controlling interest in the bank. This, it so happened, belonged to no one else but Lucio Tan. No problemo!

In the name of Gloriaetta, who was not exactly the heroine of a really big group of Filipinos who got sick and tired of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band . . . Lucio Tan must divest right away. If he doesn't, this cute administration gets a big blackeye this early. That really big group of Filipinos may think . . . well, "fixed already (*ayos na*)."

Apparently, that particular point convinced Lucio Tan to accept the brilliant decision of Finance. No matter what bad things they say about the man, he has a conscience. Unlike many others, his conscience even costs him a huge amount of money.

* * *

BASED on official estimate, Lucio Tan paid for his PNB shares at an average price of P100 per. The PNB stock is doing today in the stock market at only P40 per. Such is the pathetic price which Finance can get for the government shares.

But if Finance could sell Lucio Tan's controlling interest as well, who knows, perhaps the buyers may pay as much as P60 per share. This means a 50-percent premium over the market price. It's quite an attractive price, I must say, particularly if the buyers have the IQ of jeepneys.

The book value of PNB shares, on the other hand, comes up to about P50 per share. Thus the government can expect a premium of 20 percent. This is still not bad, considering the sorry state of the bank. Its bad loans amounted to P60 billion as of last count, and at this moment, the bank is still counting.

That's why nobody wanted to buy the bank, silly! Remember, the Wrist Band administration already made a big fuss about selling the PNB shares of both the government and Lucio Tan, but what happened? Nobody was crazy enough to buy it.

* * *

ACTUALLY, Lucio Tan was duped in the PNB deal. They say that Lucio Tan got the deal because he was a "crony" of Wrist Band. That's why this cute administration must do something about it, such as forcing Lucio Tan to sell at a huge loss.

In reality, Lucio Tan was fooled by the Wrist Band administration in buying into the bank. For one, he was not given the chance to exercise due diligence. For two, he was not told how bad its finances have become through the years. Well, what do you expect? The bank was under government control.

PNCC, for instance, which is the Luzon tollway operator, which is also under government control, by the way, became so good in losing a lot of money, the company could easily borrow from PNB under every administration from the dictator to the actor. In between of course were Tita Cory and Kuya Eddie. You ask how was that possible?

Simple—it's because the government controlled the bank. Believe me, even the government itself has unsettled loans with PNB. They amount to something like only P20 billion. Do you think the future buyers, if any, would forgive those loans? Try again.

* * *

AND so, there's already the huge loss which Lucio Tan must be willing to take, although there's no clinical evidence he is crazy, and he is doing it for the sake of the "healing" policy of this cute administration.

On top of that, to make the PNB sale a success, finally, Finance must also offer additional perks. Among them are, well, can the government repay its huge debts with the bank, please? And all because, by selling Lucio Tan's interest, Finance gets a huge premium of 50 percent or 20 percent, depending on where you sit.

Just look at that—it's all right with this administration that, while the government enjoys a premium, Lucio Tan must take a loss of 50 percent. This, in absolute amount, easily could cost him a few billions.

The poor little rich taipan, thus, agrees to obey the solo decision of Finance, provided they can lessen his loss to a several hundreds of millions. Only! You think that's fair enough? Well, the government thinks it's fair. Really, it never occurred to anybody above in this cute administration that it's a shame.

* * *

TO attract buyers for PNB, you see, and they will surely come from that really big group of Filipinos who placed Gloriaetta into power, Finance is dangling a huge amount of loans. No, the money will not come from Finance, silly. The government has no money!

It's only right that the money for the loans, amounting to P15 to P20 billion, easily, will come from the Bangko Sentral. Just to attract buyers and assure it gets a premium, Finance is even willing to give the loans at rates which are subsidized by no other than the Bangko Sentral. Great!

There you have it—this cute administration is ready, willing and able to give out subsidized loans to whoever buys PNB, even if they are foreigners. Never mind that, in the process, one of its own nationals must take a big hit. They also call all it "healing." Well, Lucio Tan should only pay the price for being a Wrist Band "crony."

Under Tita Cory, who was not friendly to his group, Lucio Tan made a lot of money. Under Kuya Eddie, whose boys wanted to jail Lucio Tan himself, he also made a lot of money. Under Wrist Band, who was supposedly his "friend," Lucio Tan lost a fortune. Some friend, huh?

Equitable PCI BANK

INVITATION TO BID

The **ACQUIRED ASSETS DIVISION** of Equitable PCIBank is inviting offers to purchase by the way of sealed bids, in cash and on an "as-is-where-is" basis, the following real estate properties:

TCT NO./AREA (in sqms.)/DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	PRICE
I. METRO MANILA		
1) 206056/208 m2/res. w/ impvts.	Comer Alfonso & Fermina Sts., Bgy. Poblacion, Makati City	P 21,904,000
2) PT-113705-707/374 m2/res. w/ impvts.	Comer of Red Palm & Green Palm Sts., SPS Subd., Bgy Malinao, Pasig City	3,400,000
3) 143216/63 m2/res. townhouse	L7 Bk 2, Villa Aurora Townhomes, Sarmiento St., Better Living Subd., Pque City	1,021,201
4) V-53853/772 m2/ind'l/res.	107 Dulong Tanke St., Bgy. Malinta, Valenzuela City	4,848,568
II. PROVINCIAL		
1) T-7035-40/4,284 m2/res./comm'l.	Bonifacio St., between J. Garcia & P. Pagela Sts., Poblacion Tuao, Cagayan	6,966,900
2) T-7041-42/1,220 m2/res./comm'l.	R. Ballesteros & R. Ballesteros Ext. Sts., Bo. Alabug, Tuao, Cagayan	5,297,143
3) T-327862-909/8,796 m2/res. vacant lots	Guadalupe Subd., Lanang, Davao City	16,563,200
4) T-137698-99/33,109 & 10,000 m2/res./agri.	Bo. Iponan, Cagayan de Oro City	7,163,550

Complete description/specification of the above properties, rules & regulations on the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available from the following officers:

All Properties MS. LITA O. VALENCIA/VP/LUCHIE M. CASTILLO/AO/MANNY R. APILADO/AO/CHARLIE D. MACAZO/AO/KAREN U. RESARI/AO/TON-TON P. MALABUYO/AO -Tel. Nos. 817-8909/ 817-2822/840-7638/894-1910/840-7644/840-7920

Bidding will be held on April 3, 2001 at 10:00 A.M., 11/F SAM Con. Rm., Equitable PCIBank Tower 1, Makati Ave., Makati City for all items. Bidders deposit equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid price in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check together with the duly accomplished bid form must be enclosed in a sealed envelope. All sealed bids will be opened on scheduled bidding date as stated above. All winning bids are subject to approval by the Bank's approving authority.

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DISCLOSURES

MONDRAGON International Phils. Inc. has rescheduled its annual stockholders' meeting from March 16 to Sept. 10. It will be held at the Mondragon House Ballroom, Makati City, at 9 a.m.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Banco Filipino** declared a 10-percent stock dividend payable to all common stockholders of record as of the date to be determined by the Securities and Exchange Commission. It will serve as the bank's compliance to the minimum subscription of at least 25 percent of the P3-billion increase in the authorized capital stock of the bank.

* * *

ROBINSONS Land Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 24, 4 p.m., at the Amorsolo Ballroom of the Manila Galleria Suites, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

* * *

TANDUAY Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 2, 4 p.m., at the Kachina Room of the Century Park Sheraton Hotel, Manila.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. announced that only stockholders of record as of May 25 are entitled to notice of, and to vote at its annual stockholders meeting on June 25. It will be held at the 47th floor, RCBC Plaza, Yuchengco Tower, Makati City, at 4 p.m.

Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, March 16, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	69.5	68	69.5	308,600
China Banking Corp.	650	650	650	650	30
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49	49.5	49	49.5	54,400
First E-Bank Corporation	2	2	2	2	3,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	65	68.5	65	68.5	5,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	220	223	218	219	97,800
Prudential Bank	500	500	500	500	400
Philippine National Bank	43	44	43	44	80,400
Security Bank Corp.	21.5	21.5	21	21	179,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	26	26	2,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.38	98,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1230	1230	1230	1230	4,910
Sun Life Financial Serv.	880	890	875	885	3,900
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	42	42.5	42	42.5	22,600
Diversified Fin. Network	9	9	9	9	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.51	0.52	3,190,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	2,800,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	120,000
Piltel	0.6	0.61	0.6	0.6	380,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	760	765	760	760	70,370
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.065	0.0675	0.0625	0.065	146,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	48	48	48	48	4,300
Manila Electric Co. B	55	56	54.5	56	296,600
Petron Corp.	1.74	1.76	1.7	1.7	2,656,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.12	1,112,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	70,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	540,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	11	11	10.25	10.25	5,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	285,500
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	35	35	34.5	34.5	60,400
RFM Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	45,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47	48	47	47	31,200
San Miguel Corp. B	53	53.5	53	53	31,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	700,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	50,000
Ayala Corp.	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4	1,322,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.5	1.52	1.46	1.46	2,373,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	12	11.5	12	1,300
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	150,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	12,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.65	2.6	2.65	190,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	310,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.65	2.7	1,545,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	100,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.87	1.4	0.87	1.4	67,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	304,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	22.75	22.75	22.5	22.75	85,600
Global Equities Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	450,000
Ionics Inc.	12	12.25	11.75	12	182,000
Ipeople Inc. B	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	40,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	35,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.83	0.84	670,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.52	2,220,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	115,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	840,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	180,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.29	0.25	0.29	82,890,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings-B	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,080,000
Music Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.55	2.55	955,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12	700,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.13	0.13	350,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	60,000
Spi Technologies Inc.	12	12	11.75	11.75	320,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	40,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.62	0.63	1,210,000
Manila Jockey Club	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	42	43	42	42	299,300
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.65	3.7	3.65	3.7	17,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	12,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	16,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	2,100
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.05	0.055	0.05	0.055	400,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	350	350	350	20	7,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	5,771,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.27	2,210,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.4	1,520,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	15,810,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	5,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.22	2.24	2.12	2.14	11,238,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1	1	1	1	7,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	150,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07	9,000,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3,000,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	299,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	1,000,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Omico Corporation	0.004	0.004	0.0038	0.0038	16,000,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.005	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	13,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	17,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.08	0.0825	1,900,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	360,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	250,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	849,340	63,061,065.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	296,272,390	172,623,135.00
PRO	50,111,000	73,112,015.00
Mining	26,500,000	221,100.00
OIL	32,510,000	416,700.00
GRAND TOTALS :	406,242,730	309,434,015.00

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	596.14	UP	5.11
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,048.81	UP	7.33
PRO	566.94	UP	3.41
Mining	1,227.69	UP	16.33
OIL	1.65	DOWN	0.17
All Shares Index	733.64	UP	7.57
Composite	1,498.32	UP	6.71

NO. OF ADVANCES: 33; NO. OF DECLINES: 33; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 37; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 103; NO. OF TRADES: 2,004

CURRENCIES

Mar. 16, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.113586	1.000000	48.3670
Japan	Yen	0.009099	0.008171	0.3952
United Kingdom	Pound	1.598552	1.435500	69.4308
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.142778	0.128215	6.2014
Switzerland	Franc	0.649928	0.583635	28.2287
Canada	Dollar	0.714020	0.641190	31.0124
Singapore	Dollar	0.628329	0.564239	27.2905
Australia	Dollar	0.550000	0.493900	23.8885
Bahrain	Dinar	2.953965	2.652661	128.3013
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.296924	0.266638	12.8965
Brunei	Dollar	0.628506	0.564398	27.2982
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000101	0.0049
Thailand	Baht	0.025384	0.022795	1.1025
UAE	Dirham	0.303198	0.272272	13.1690
Korea	Won	0.000867	0.000779	0.0377
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.898000	43.4336
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.45914	22.2072
France	Franc	0.152450	0.136899	6.6214
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.407495	19.7093
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.065260	3.1564
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.022261	1.0767
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000464	0.0224
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.151033	7.3050
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004479	0.2166
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005397	0.2610
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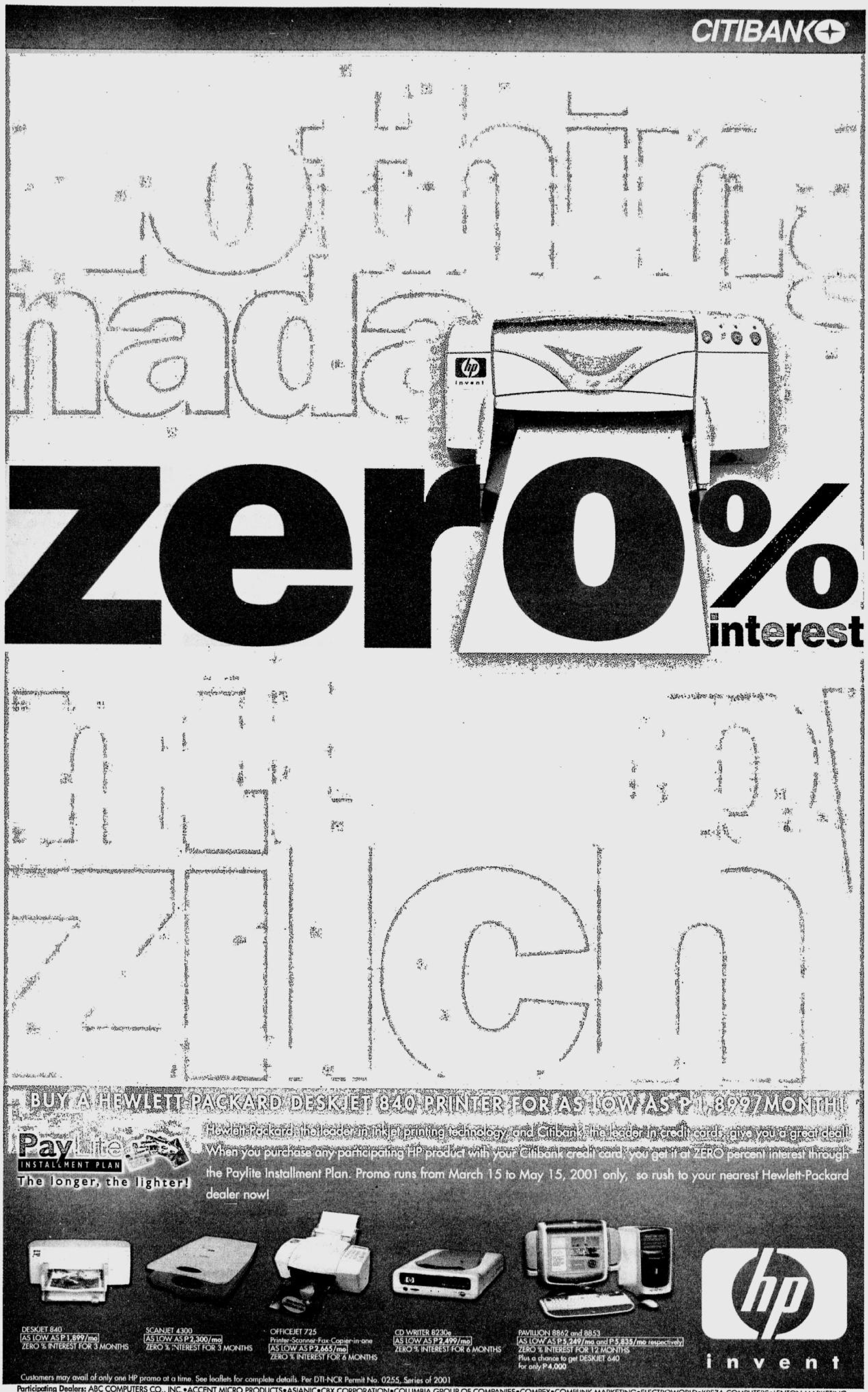
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.140225	55.1493



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Grnind bnew 3br 2M 9487112

PASIG

• Nr Ortigas & Makati H&L Twnhouse P4-5-5M Very Nice Villi Page 1441-112235 0917-5320224 Jojo

Valle Verde I, H&L corner facing park, 542m², 48m front, nice garden, 4BRs, family hall, library, workshop, 2kitchens, 5TB, patio, terrace, 7 air-cons, oven, 4car garage, P18.5M Tel. 638-8508 / 3313 /3314

VALLE VERDE Rush9126833

QUEZON CITY

Nr Rbinson,SMFview 260m² only P980T 'cheap'4140418

Concrete 2sty 5BR 6TB Srvnt-sQtrs Library wide Sala No Agents 407m² nr Congressional Ave QC 9275456

North Olympus 4173705

ST CHARBEL 5BR 2STY 4102695

Vis Ave 1.3M 2BR •Proj7 nr SM 249m² • 09179834920 •

RIZAL

CAINTA VISTA VERDE Cor Lot 3BR 2TB 247sqm P2.5M (Neg) Tel#637-8003

PROVINCIAL

1. Malolos 2Sty 6 units New Twnhses 980T ea. w in a spacious cmpd nr Univ & along main road.
2. San Jose Ayala Technoparnk Imp 2 Sty 3Bdrm Sale / Rent 8509863 / 8265073

3BR 2TB Citta Italia Imus Cavite 2.3M 09174790961

LAGUNA BEL-AIR LA:110m² 1.4M Neg.T8388665 Norman

Tagaytay RshNew Vac Hse 316m² 200FA titled near church Our Mother of Perpetual Help 0464134249

OTHER AREAS

CanyonWoods Btngas 7.5M ownerlvngSF0917-8143792

•Cavite H&L P681T LA70m² FA50m² In house 2stry 4133313•7217162

LOT

LAS PINAS

PilarVII 180m²Rush9126833

MANILA

SAMPALOC front UST9126833

UNIVERSITY BELT 300sqm/444sqm 937-2622/937-2640

PARANAQUE

BF300/600m²Rush9126833

PASIG

Along C-Raymundo 3840m² @ 7.8T/m² 30%DP BalTerms Tel 6811766 DBO

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LOT

QUEZON CITY

RUSH 650m² Mo.Ignacia QC Direct Only 3732158 / 59

•60m²upnrSM/LagroTerms P2000/In-house or Cash •Fairview 95m²up Terms 4133313 •3623715 & 16

Loyola Grand 600m² @ P8500 Call 09165079799

RUSH 650m² Mo.Ignacia QC Direct Only 3732158/59

RIZAL

246m² 3.9T/m² VISTA VERDE Cainta 6467425

Antipolo 471sqm P10T/m² Bhind Ant. Market Square Sumulong St., • 630-3032

Pililla Rizal Along Hway 81&37has@ 70m² 6811766

PROVINCIAL

3812m² Talisay, Batangas RUSH - Direct 3732158 / 59

3812m² Talisay, Batangas RUSH - Direct 3732158/ 59

•MOLINO CAVITE• beside Springville Gardens 117m² 750m² 6264056;09189157784

Puerto Princesa good 4 fstfood bank 0917-3711210

•San Jose Bulacan P1800 /along Sta Maria Road & Bus/ Jeepline Terms 4133313 •7217162•3623715

OTHER AREAS

300 sqm. Resd'l Lot, Brgy. Tabi, Guiguinto Bul. 922-3297

Mla Swoods 580m² 9126833

EAGLE RIDGE Rush9126833

RUSH SALE South Peak, San Pedro 331m² corner lot Tel. #842-1029

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

MAKATI

•88 Corp. Ctr BNew 178m² Sale or Rent 412-1825

MANILA

Bnew w/garage Singalong nr St. Anthony 2.8MT 5246160

MANDALUYONG

2BR,2TB,w/garage Sulatan St. near Goldi/McDo-Boni P2.5M Neg. •Tel#:5320265•

RushIMegaPlaza 48.50sqm 1br 2.7MNeg 09178143792

Sedar-Ortigas 5.2M 3br/3tb Rush142sqm 09178143792

PARANAQUE

Bet Liv 2stry 09176011115

PASIG

ORTIGAS CTR 1-3BR Bnew Rent or Sale 412-1825

ORTIGAS CONDO Ultimate in Luxury/Quality Specs: 2BR 2B+MB F-Furn All Italian + 3AC / WD/ Jacuzzi, 2Kit, 126m² + Prkg 5.5M Aptmnt Only 633-6844

Pacific Place Ortigas 3BR 3TB Pkg SF 3.9M 6352115

RENAISSANCE 2000 100+ sq.m. F/A 4.9M Tel. 807-1245

QUEZON CITY

Cubao Condo P1.3M "EZ"terms Swap Lots Cars C. Shares 9120647 9124428 4381480

Teachers Village 4M New 50%DP Bal 2yrs No Int. 170m² 3BR3TB MQ CG Attic Aircon Mr. Marco 9220939 09192372039 09195825646

•LOYOLA HEIGHTS• 40N. Reyes St. 4BR 4T&B with attic P4.2M FA210m² 436-4608/928-0354

NOVALICHES 350T 9390299

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

QUEZON CITY

RENT TO OWN 4BR/3TB P3.6M Cubao Bank Loan also Available Call now 421-0423

RIZAL

2Stry,3BR,2TB,P1.6M(neg) Cainta •8853226•6495336•

Montalban 350T 913-0393

PROVINCIAL

•Northgate Thses P400T Terms 2stry/2BR/RFO Pag-ibig Buyers Welcome 4133313•7217162•3623715

OTHER AREAS

CANYONWOODS Twnhse with nice Taal Lake view along Tagaytay Ridge 4BR 4TB 240m² Lot fully furn strong H²O Ownermigrating 5.4M Clubshare Comm'l Value 700T included Call 924-1058 or 0917-8129049

MEMORIAL LOT

HERITAGE PARK 141-092807

CLUB SHARE & MEMBERSHIP

Orchard Golf Share: P360,000 • Direct Buyers 638-3313 / 3314 / 8508

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

MAKATI

2BRTB tel. grg 15T 8441669

Mkt. Apt. 4 rent T8954370

STUDIO TYPE 8708416

MANILA

Sta. Ana U/D 4T 7146960

MANDALUYONG

845 Samat St., Mand. City 2BR w/Tel Garage & Free H²O • Tel.# 533-7709 - 12

Studio 1Br & 2Br Units 4 Rent Call Gina/Elynor 5321016 (Telefax) MDC Residential Bldg 101 Isaac Lopez St, Mand. City

PARANAQUE

2BR Svrina 7T 049-4115370

QUEZON CITY

2 Bedrooms 725-9419

Available for occupancy Residential units located at 29 G. Araneta Ave. QC near schools like UERMMC, CCP, Immaculate Heart of Mary Col. also near at UERM hospital & SM Centerpoint each unit has 2BR, 1TB, sala, dining & laundry area with 24 hrs sec guard tel nos. 7165513 & 8691196 Look for Leila & Butch

HOUSE

PARANAQUE

4BR3TB UPS4 SSHY 8212091

Hse 4/3brms F'nished or Not Tel AC Off 5666358 Owner 09198344401 4Occu. •BF Homes Exec Paranaque•

QUEZON CITY

1BR nr Ateneo 7T 6819727

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

1BR furnh South Str Plaza 8447524

1BR nr. P.Tamo T8974676

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

CONDO/TWNHSE

PARANAQUE

2BDRM 2T&B BF HOMES PQUE TEL. 8071245 12T/M

PASIG

RENAISSANCE 2000 PASIG F/F w/ tel. & parking 35T a month Tel. 8071245

QUEZON CITY

P4,500/mo.CUBAO P6,500/mo.Malate Call 911-3361 / 926-4071

Loyola Grand Villa 12T 2BR 2TB 926-6228 / 436-0142

FOR LEASE

Commercial 12T/mo BF Paranaque •Tel#807-1245•

Comm'l/Office/Residential TEL. 8071245 BF Paranaque

Long Term Lease 1440m² Comml Lots @ Tirona St. Bagong Barrio Caloocan Factry & Warehse 9275456

MAKATI

- FCC Bldg., 110 Rada St. 1 Condo Office Unit 46 sqm Lease @ P18,100.00/mo. or Sale @ P3.18 Million
- Pasong Tamo Extension Warehouse with Office FA: 2,900 sqm/ Yard 1,000 sqm
- Jupiter St., Office Bldg., 4-storey Net FA: 1,455 sqm Parking 11 Slots

MANILA

- San Nicolas/Del Pan Sts. Concrete Warehouse Area: 1,579 sqm Lease @ P90/sqm or Sale @ P100,000/sqm
- Vito Cruz St., Malate Office-Residential Condo. Areas from 139-217sqm Monthly Rent P222.75-247/sqm.

MALABON

Acacia Gov. Pascual Ave.
Concrete Warehouse
Area: 1,500 sqm
Secured Compound
Flood Free
Monthly Rent P75/sqm

ZITRO REAL ESTATE

Tels: 818-2781; 751-5472

WAREHOUSE FOR LEASE
Located at Balete St. Brgy. Lala-an, Silang, Cavite
Consisting of 8 almost new large factory - warehouses w/complete facilities & READY TO OPERATE
Bldg. I - 3,216m²
Bldg. II -3,360m²
Bldg. III - 3,360m²
Bldg. IV - 3,300m²
Bldg.V - 5,000m²
Bldg. VI - 10,368m²
Bldg. VII - 6,696m²
Bldg. VIII - 3,888m²
Lease offers on any of the buildings will be considered at P50.00/m²
For inquiries Call
Tel. (045) 893-0201 to 05
Fax(045)8930206 to 08

ROOM & BOARD

Cubao Strong H2O; P850 9124106

Ldy Nr DLSU V. Cruz 5234844

Mkti Apartel 500-700/day 3T-4.2T/wk ful/fur 8995386

Near DLSU/Quirino Ave. Call 523-5465 / 523-8761

BUSINESS RENTAL

P1,800/mo Stalls Malate T-400-6420/23 Sn Pedro Lag 8086006/07

Comml Space 206sqm Call 6710815 / 6715071 Yolly

PASIG Bo. De La Paz Off/ Whse LA1000m² 3PH 2Tel Call 725-0462

Pasig City nr Public Market Comm'l & Office Spaces 350m² (2/Flr); 500m² (3/Flr) Tel.# 628-0617 • 641-6648

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

BUSINESS RENTAL

Prime Office Space for Lease at 11F LV Locsin Bldg. Ayala Ave. w/ Manila Pen & Shangri-la View 440sqm CALL MANDY AT •817-6306 & 750-8468•

RESORT

PansolHotSpringPrvt 776-7507

Private Resort 2000m² 1.5M Location Balesin Island 822-4150 776- 7855/56 Bien

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

97CRV U.S. Version Loaded 1st Own 720T Low Mileage 9362785

99HONDA VII 420K 8064640

MAZDA

94 B2200 209T 8316830

MITSUBISHI

91 GLNT GTI 235T 8315354

MITSUBISHI L-300 (046)970-2184

NISSAN

98 Cefiro Elite A/T Black 800T Neg. 19km •8420343•

SPECIAL CARS

97Grand Caravan Loaded 1stOwn P950T Low Mileage 036-2785

BUSES/TRUCKS

Pre-Summer Sale: NKR P220 Canter P190 Delica P140 NHR P200 Daihatsu Van P95 Toyota Pass. Van P275T T-Ace P-up P130 Van P140 9126976; 4381480; 9132224

PARTS & ACCESSORIES

Fiberglass Bullbar Mfg Rush living USA 23 yr establish/supplier of Tyt Nissan Isuzu Mit./Gd bg loc/tec™rn. 4377456 Cell #0919-7410965

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

Cheap Vans 'n MB 9344998

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

Bnew L300 8254058 8261045

CARS•VANS•8957247•8969956 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8955623

FXcheapprov.rates3730584

IT/ Hiace 9136710/4333682

L300 Van 5109530/8533103

SELFDRIVE NEW CARS & VANS OPEN 24Hrs. ABC 5368822/3039789

U Drive Cars Vans 8006595

•Car;Vans4535288;9296250

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

We Buy Used Cars! Try Us High Appraisal! 7405692

CAR LOAN

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523-24

2% w/o taking car 7262780

2% w/o Taking Car 3670169

HERWAY INC.

A leading direct selling company with 24 branches nationwide is in need of the following additional personnel for its expansion program.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
- Proficient in oral and written communication
- Computer literate
- With pleasing personality

ACCOUNTANTS/AUDITOR
- Accounting graduate
- With or without experience
- Computer literate

PHARMACIST
- Licenced pharmacist
- With or without experience

PROGRAMMER/ENCODER
- Graduate of Computer Science or other related courses
- With or without experience

ARTIST
- Computer literate
- With experience

Interested parties may send their application letter and resume with 2x2 latest photograph to HRD Department, Herway Inc.
584 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City, Philippines
E-mail: herway@pacific.net.ph/Website.www.herway.com.ph
Tel. No. 533-7051 to 57/Fax No. 533-9228

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

ELECTRONIC & INDUSTRIAL EQUIP

ATTENTION!!! Rock Crusher, Mining and Screening Owners. We Supply: High Carbon & Stainless Wire Screen Perforated Screen Plate Rubber Nozzling Conveyor Rollers A-Line Industrial Sales Tel no. 463-8044/ 79 Fax36

HOME APPLIANCE

JUKI SEWING 5T 8316830

PETS

Maltese Sharpei Chihua Lab Pups 9112099 9976469

PBull Dzer-Bldog 456-3320

SPORTING GOODS

Billiard 23T 25T & 30T New Accept C.Card • 781-9453

BTABLE B'Now/Accessories (02)8014494/8020566

Cheap Tables 7311881

STRIKEMASTER Bowling & Billiards Sales & Rentals T-9341569

Thunderball Billiards New Tables/Acc. 714-5044

WANTED TO BUY

B/SELL FUL PD EDUC PLAN Gie 7137284•09177939632

BUYING ROLEX others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair ROLEX Tel# 804-0484 • 034-2886

MISCELLANEOUS

Bnew PC P15.5T 9254960

•GARAGE SALE• #3 Ponce St. San Lorenzo Village Makati City March 18 & 19 9AM-5PM

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Drivers-For Rent-A-Car 22-30 yrs. old w/NBI Stay In, Bring Bio-data/ picture Tel. 3039789

Letter Press (Minerva) Operator 733-2507

Personnel Mgr w/ exp. T9121664 txt 0917-9951648

FEMALE

Bag Sewer&Cutter 8723199

DOMESTIC HELPER DRESS MAKER 3039476/5623962

Maid 4 Foreigner 726-1266

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

Secretary/Clerk 22-28 yrs. knows computer w/NBI ADC Cara 5360822

Xraytech, Midwife, Nurse Pref. Near Cainta 6822941

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T6280722

★ IMMIGRATE ★ LIVE and WORK in Canada Australia 8175611/0944060

M.D.&Skin Therapist w/exp Call Dra. Umali at Tel. No. 7235265; 7219227; 7219228

New life insurance co. is looking 4 highly qualified Ind. We give high comp. + comm. Look 4 Bea Arellano at 456-5030/0917-8323189

"Quickly "- Service Crew 744-0646/723-8683

Service Company Needs:
1. Secretary/Staff Asst.
2. Service Technicians
Call 7252322

URGENT OFFICE STAFF PLS. CALL 7366660 LK FOR GEM

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

FREE BASIC COMPUTER LESSONS WORD ETC 9319609

•NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC• Fantasy World Certificate of Proprietary Membership #002207 was cancelled on FEBRUARY 4, 2001. This certificate issued to LINDA P. ANBOCHI is no longer valid to any transaction.
PDI-Mar.17,18 & 19, 2001

AUCTION SALE

G.Y. Lopez Pawnshop, Inc.
#15 Gen. Santos Avenue
Lower Bicutan, Taguig
will hold an Auction Sale on
•March 24,2001•
•at 9:00a.m.•
Including all items pawned up to October 2000
V.Zamora Jr. Lic. Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

TELEMARKETING 2477469

WAKE UP YOUR SAVINGS TRIPLE YOUR MONEY IN 1YR 0917-4719372 (DAVE)

AIRLINE MILE REWARDS & CA$H FREE ENROLLMENT. Visit www.thepayline.com blessings2@zwallet.com Cryus Inq (0917)4171985

•EARN FR HOME 8531008•

Established Hotel Laundry 580T • Call 0919-3447658

PARLOR/VIDEO P80T w/in Exclu Condo 0919-3447658

RTW / Swimsuits 727-4934

RTW Cash/Consign 3738821

RTW Cash/Term 3714226

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

EARN UNLIMITED INCOME
JEWELLERY
ON CONSIGNMENT
VERY EASY INSTALLMENT TERMS
CALL OUR HOT LINES: [illegible] 09177010704 09194471088

LEGAL NOTICE

DEED OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL PARTITION WITH WAIVER IN FAVOUR OF ONE OF THE HEIRS
NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late ANGELITA A. BURREROS who died intestate on December 6 2000 at St. Luke's Medical Center 279 E Rodriguez St., Quezon City left a Share Ownership Statement No 0123*9645 of 133 shares from the Sun Life Financial Services of Canada as a demutualization benefit has been the subject of Extrajudicial Settlement Among Heirs executed by her legal heirs namely ANTONIO BURREROS and ANTONIETTE A. BURREROS. That the parties hereto agree to divide and adjudicate themselves equally whatever proceeds maybe derived from the sale of the shares. However ANTONIETTE BURREROS do hereby transfer, cede by way of waiver her equal shares to ANTONIO BURREROS Acknowledged before Notary Public Atty Edwin O. Betguer as per Doc No 84, Page No 17, Book No XI Series of 2001
(PDI – Mar. 3, 10 & 17, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given on the loss of PLDT Stock Certificate MF0233412 with 67 Shares registered under the name of Balbino K. Hernando or Rosalinda A. Hernando. If no contest received after 1 year, new certificates will be issued PDI-March 10, 17 & 24, 2001

Notice is hereby given that the ACR#E044564 CRTV#31275 issued to MR. CAI JIAN CHENG were lost last Feb. 22, 2001 at Pearl Island II Sta. Lucia Subd. Bgy. Puntirin, Valenzuela City. If found pls. call 432-9002
(PDI-March 10 & 17, 2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.

Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail so be sure you really want what you ask.

COMMERCIAL MEAT/ ABATTOIR INSPECTORS

.Animal Care Asia, an international animal care organization, will be opening an office in or near Manila, and is currently seeking one or more abattoir inspectors to serve as Consultants for wide range investigations into every aspect of the meat industry that caters to today's market here in the Philippines, and into live animal care and treatment within the commercial meat trade.

·Applicants seeking salaried consultant positions should have experience and thorough knowledge of Abattior operations in their area. Also, voluntary unpaid assistance from knowledgeable individuals concerned in animal welfare will be sincerely appreciated.

Applicants and concerned citizens, please send resume and/or introduction letter to:

Animal Care Asia
P.O. Box MCS 9093
Makati City, Philippines

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills
City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION
FOR THE REHABILITATION FOR DECLARATION OF
SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS

SEC CASE NO. 03-99-6228

STANFORD RESOURCES
AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
Petitioner.
x--x

ORDER

Pursuant to Section 6-5, Rule VI of the Rules of Procedure on Corporate Recovery of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and a Liquidator having been duly qualified, it is hereby ordered that all creditors of Petitioner Stanford Resources and Development Corporation file their respective claims against it on or before April 16, 2001 with the Liquidator:

Atty. Manuel D. Yngson
10th Floor STRATA 2000 Building,
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. Nos. 631-7358 to 590

All claims not filed with the Liquidator at the end of such period shall be deemed barred. All claims listed in the Schedule of Debts and Liabilities or filed under Rule III and Rule IV of the Rules of Procedure on Corporate Recovery are deemed automatically filed with the Liquidator for the unpaid portion thereof.

The Liquidator is hereby directed to publish this Order once in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation at least (30) days before April 16, 2001.

This Order shall likewise be served by the Liquidator on all creditors or claimants of record.

SO ORDERED.

Mandaluyong City, Philippines

01 MARCH 2001.

(Sgd.) **JUNAME C. DE LEON-MIGUEL**
Hearing Officer

(Sgd.) **MYRA-LYN B. SOLANO-PEÑALOSA**
Hearing Officer

(Sgd.) **IRENE VICTORIA ISIDORO-TORRES**
Hearing Officer

Your career might only be a click of the mouse away.

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JPN Japan Philippine Nameplate Inc.

UL CERTIFIED

IMMEDIATE HIRING

ECE (MALE / FEMALE)
(College Graduate)

Qualifications:

- Computer Literate
- With or without License
- Work experience not required
- Below 25 years old
- Good moral character and hardworking
- Willing to undergo training

Send your Resume / Application direct to JPN:
Address: Lot 9 Blk. 13 Cavite Economic Zone
Rosario, Cavite
Tel.# : (046) 437-1714 / 17
Fax# : (046) 437-1713
E-mail : jpn@okane.skyinet.net
Contact person : Ms. Marie / Tina

INVITATION TO INTERESTED CONTRACTORS

The U.S. Embassy, Manila has a requirement for packing, freight handling, forwarding, cargo storage, customs clearance and other shipment related services that apply to shipments originating from, consigned to, routed through and/or moved within the geographic areas of Manila, Cebu, La Union, Tarlac and Baguio.

Target Date of Release of Solicitation: 03/26/01
Target Date of Submission of Offers: 04/26/01

At a minimum, each firm must meet the following requirements:

(a) Be able to understand written and spoken English;
(b) Have an established business with a permanent address and telephone listing;
(c) Have the necessary personnel, equipment, and financial resources available to perform the work;
(d) Have the ability to obtain a performance/guarantee bond and a payment bond, or to post adequate performance security, such as irrevocable letters of credit or guarantees issued by a reputable financial institution;
(e) Have no adverse criminal record;
(f) Have no political or business affiliation which could be considered contrary to the interests of the United States.

Interested contractors capable of providing these services are invited to submit a letter of intent to participate in the solicitation on or before 4:00 p.m. on March 23, 2001 to the Contracting Officer, American Embassy, Manila, through fax # 833-8203. If you wish to hand carry your letter, fax the following information at least one (1) day in advance for prior approval: Name of company; name of representative; date and time of arrival; make, model, color and plate number of vehicle (if any). No telephone request will be considered. The Contracting Office is located at the General Services Office (GSO) Building, Seafront Compound, Pasay City. Contact person are Rhoda E. Songcuan and Noel Arturo G. Ocampo who can be reached at 523-1001 Loc. 2787 or 2747.

(PDI--March 17 & 18, 2001)

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makro

Pilipinas Makro Inc.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Re: Collection of Membership Fees

Pilipinas Makro, Inc. would like to inform the public that it does not authorize any individual or groups to collect annual membership fees from new or old members at their places of residence or business. All payments of the said annual membership fee are collected from members only at the store once a year.

Please report any violators at the following telephone numbers:

Metro Manila: (02) 6567451; 9362216;
8506570; 2563106; 8426771
Cavite: (046) 5152222
Cebu: (032) 3459540
Davao: (082) 2983560

Do you want to work for a high-tech company that puts people's communication first?

Ericsson is the leading provider in the new telecoms world, with communications solutions that combine telecom and datacom technologies with the freedom of mobility for the user. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for its customers - network operators, service providers, enterprises and customers-the world over.

If you are interested in the position offered below, we would like you to know that Ericsson's very advanced technologies have only one objective: to make it easier for people to communicate.

Wherever they are, whenever they want.

- TOTAL PROJECT MANAGER
- DIRECTOR
- TECHNICAL MANAGER

Interested applicants may submit or e-mail their resume to:

MR. ALBERT R. CUSTODIO
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
7th floor, Octagon Building, San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
albert.custodio@enp.ericsson.se

Make yourself heard.

ERICSSON

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Science and Technology
PHILIPPINE ATMOSPHERIC, GEOPHYSICAL AND
ASTRONOMICAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (PAGASA)
Asiatrust Bank Building, 1424 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City 1104

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bidding Date : **April 6, 2001**
Pre-Bid Conference : **March 21, 2001**
(WFFC Conference Room) (9:00 a.m.)

Rental of Copier Machines
Janitorial Services
Technical Supplies

Interested parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on the above using **TWO ENVELOPE SYSTEM** to be opened publicly at the Conference Room of the Weather & FLood Forecasting Center (WFFC), DIC Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Bid requirements will be issued at the PAGASA Records Section, 4th Floor, ATB Building, 1424 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City upon presentation of this advertisement clipping, together with the company's TIN on **March 19, 2001.**

Bidding documents will be issued by the BAC Secretariat from **March 21-23, 2001** at the Records Section, 4th Floor, ATB Building.

Only eligible bidders shall be invited to the Opening of Bids on **April 6, 2001** at 1:00 p.m. at the WFFC Conference Room PAGASA DIC Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids should be accompanied by a 2.5% Bidders Bond in the form of Cash, Manager's Check or GSIS Bond.

All inquiries concerning this invitation to bid should be addressed to the Chairman, PAGASA-BAC.

The PAGASA reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason of its own, waive any formality therein when necessary and to accept complying offer considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ELLAQUIM A. ADUG**
Chairman, PAGASA-BAC

(PDI -- March 17, 2001)

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LETTER OF INTENT

The MWSS wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed Letters of Intent for the design, build, operate and transfer of a 400 MLD Bulk Water Supply Project from Laguna Lake on **March 12, 2001** until **April 16, 2001** at the Office of the Administrator.

A Project Profile may be obtained at the Office of the Deputy Administrator starting on **March 12, 2001** from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A detailed Information Memorandum will be issued to the short-listed companies. For inquiries, please call telephone numbers - **928-5691** and **922-2568**.

MWSS reserves the right to reject any company from securing the Information Memorandum and to accept only those who are qualified including established global water system operators and consortia of companies (i.e., funders, investors, manufacturers and contractors).

It is presumed that MWSS has no obligation to any interested parties, if the bidding process has to be deferred or postponed indefinitely for valid reasons.

(Sgd.) **JOSE F. MABANTA**
Administrator

(PDI - March 4, 10 & 17, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue, Sta. Cruz, Manila
Telephone No.: 743-83-01 to 23

Invitation for Bids

Philippines

Early Childhood Development Project
Loan No. 4301-PH

Supply and Delivery of Ferrous Sulfate Drops and Syrup
IFB No. ECD-WB4301-PH (1)

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development toward the cost of Early Childhood Development Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for which this Invitation for Bids is issued, under the Component of the Department of Health (DOH).
2. The DOH now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of the following:
   (a) 411,237 bottles of Ferrous Sulfate Drops 15 mg/0.6 ml, 30 ml/bottle
   (b) 241,516 bottles of Ferrous Sulfate Syrup 30 mg/5.0 ml, 120 ml/bottle
3. Bidding will be conducted through the international competitive bidding procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the DOH and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

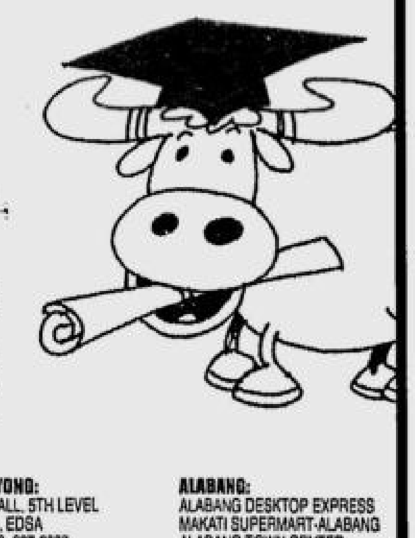
   Procurement and Logistics Service
   Department of Health
   San Lazaro Compound
   Sta. Cruz, Manila
   Tel. No. (632) 711-6831
   Telefax No. (632) 711-6712
5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) or US$250.00 including air courier for foreign Bidders. The method of payment will be cash or bank draft. Information including names of potential Bidders and contact persons, telephone and facsimile numbers, cable, e-mail and mailing address should be provided in the application to facilitate communications during the bidding process.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 10:00 a.m. on **9 May 2001**. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than two and a half (2.5) percent of the amount of the bid. Late bids will be rejected.
7. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bid conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on **25 April 2001** at the address below.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

   Convention Hall
   Department of Health
   San Lazaro Compound
   Sta. Cruz, Manila
   Philippines

(Sgd.) **ZENAIDA O. LUDOVICE, MD, MPH, CESO II**
Assistant Secretary
Chairperson, Central Office Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI -- March 17, 18 & 25, 2001)

SUCCESS!



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KEEPING UP WITH TIMES

Price tag law up for review

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT will review the implementing rules and regulations of the Price Tag Law to encompass advances in retailing technology, particularly bar coding.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health concurred with the Philippine Retailers Association's proposal to update the Price Tag Law. The DOH covers personal care products sold in stores.

The Price Tag Law strictly requires all retailers to put sticker prices on all goods that are for sale to ensure that consumers are fully informed of the goods' value. Violators are fined between P1 and P1 million. The law covers all retailers from the *sari-sari* store to giant shopping malls.

The PRA has called for a review of this rule saying the it has not kept up with new trends in retailing such as the use of bar codes and scanners instead of price labels. PRA said most retailers are adopting new technology in their operations in order to track inventory more accurately, cut costs, reduce manpower and improve efficiency.

The DTI requires retailers to put price tags along with the bar codes because consumers would not know the price of the goods until after they have been scanned at the checkout counter.

Roxas said the DTI and DOH have agreed to accept the bar codes as compliance to the Price Tag Law on condition that they would have separate price tags on their shelves and scanner stations at strategic locations in their stores.

Aside from the Price Tag Law, the DTI is currently toughening up the Consumer Act of the Philippines in response to mounting complaints against unscrupulous manufacturers, retailers and service providers selling defective products and providing inefficient services. The DTI wants to raise the penalties against violators because the P300,000 maximum fine under the existing law was insignificant and expand the coverage of the Consumer Act in order to focus the authority of enforcing consumer rights to one single agency, the DTI.

DREAM BROADCASTING

Manuel Abellada, president of the Philippine Multi-Media Systems Inc., the first local company to offer direct-to-home satellite television services in the Philippines, leads the firm's technology partners in switching on the facility of Dream Broadcasting System at the Clark special economic zone.,

San Miguel to put money in IT logistics

By Elena R. Torrijos

SAN MIGUEL Corp., the country's largest food and beverage conglomerate, said yesterday it would invest in information technology to realize its goal of becoming a logistics powerhouse.

In its annual report, San Miguel said it would establish over 80 logistics centers and ports in four years to support its logistics requirements and those of other regional players.

San Miguel also said it would develop a world class agro-industrial complex that would house modern port facilities with bulk handling capabilities.

"This logistics network will result in significant benefits in distribution costs to San Miguel, enabling us to pump these gains into new areas of growth," the company said.

The food and beverage giant also said it was putting in place a software infrastructure to support its vision on logistics and was undertaking information technology initiatives to adapt to globalization.

San Miguel is investing in a "geographic information system" that will allow it to analyze sales presentation levels and products mix in various locations. It is also developing a "decision support system" to facilitate top management's decision-making process.

"E-commerce links with selected dealers, distributors, suppliers and banks, first started in 2000 will be rolled out on a larger scale in 2001, allowing us to cut cash-to-cash cycle times and eliminate inefficient manual procedures, thus speeding up internal processes. We have since also joined several e marketplaces that will allow us to buy and sell over the Internet," San Miguel said.

San Miguel had a banner year last year when it posted a record recurring consolidated profit of P7. billion, 25 percent higher than the P6.02 billion registered the previous year.

Lopez group to invest ₱330M in call center

THE LOPEZ group is moving aggressively into the information technology business with its plan to invest, along with Australian businessmen, some P330 million in a call center at the Eastwood Cyber City Park.

The Lopez-controlled Customer Contact Center is expected to offer call center services to corporations in the United States, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region that want to outsource their customer relationship operations.

The project, which has already been approved by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, is expected to earn about $30 million in annual exports and employ more than 2,000 Filipinos.

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. chair Eugenio Lopez III is the company's president and chief operating officer.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the project underscored the vast pool of information-technology workers in the Philippines that could now be harnessed to its full potential because of advances in communications technology.

"Distance does not matter in IT. Thousands of Filipinos are hired even though their end-users are located overseas," he said.

Roxas said foreign companies were flocking to the Philippines for their call center services because of the Filipinos' proficiency with English and they required less training. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Jobless rate . . .

(From page B1)

Mindanao (10.3 percent) and Southern Mindanao (10.2 percent).

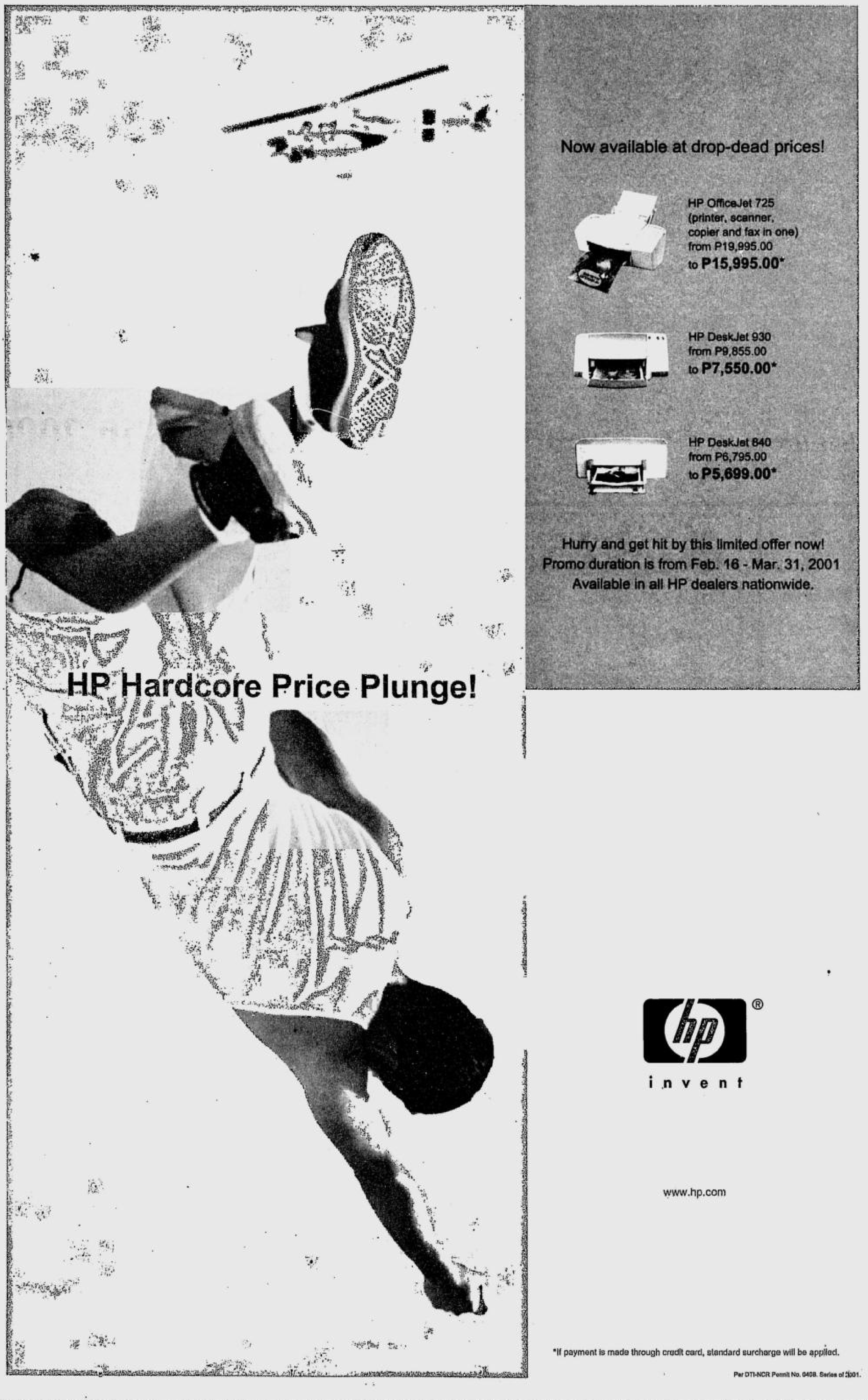
First Orient Securities economist Rolando Pineda said the surge in the country's unemployment rate in January was not surprising since the political uncertainties during the term of President Estrada had resulted in poor business confidence and the closure or streamlining of a number of enterprises.

"In the second half of 2000, a lot of companies had closed. Even during the first quarter of this year, there are still companies laying off workers to maintain financial viability," Pineda said.

Pineda said he did not believe that the reported rise in foreign investments since the ouster of Estrada would immediately result in better job creation.

"The rise in unemployment has been the trend and it's likely to continue unless the government does something about it," he said, noting that the government must improve revenue collection to encourage more investments and provide the infrastructure needed to oil the wheels of business.

For his part, Socioeconomic Planning chief Dante Canlas said he would want to see a reversal of this trend soon.



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WATER RATES ISSUE

Concessionaires made wrong assumptions

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

(Last of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System and its concessionaires are set to implement a pricing mechanism—an "auto-Cera"—that will take into account the peso's movements against the dollar. Are consumers ready for it?

The auto-Cera will be similar to the foreign currency adjustment, or FCA, scheme that power and telecommunications firms use to determine their rates in relation to their dollar-denominated debts.

MWSS chief regulator Rex Tantiongco said the MWSS board of trustees and executive committee agreed to implement an auto-Cera as a form of relief to Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.

The MWSS, however, has yet to determine the auto-Cera formula it will use. Here lies the sloppy part.

Manila Water and Maynilad want to recover losses they have incurred since 1997. These amount to about P2.75 billion, and they want consumers to foot the bill.

One formula that the MWSS is exploring is called a "creeping mechanism," which will entail moderate monthly increases of about P4 per cubic meter. However, the recovery period will be longer and eat up a maximum of three years.

Another mechanism being considered is the "eights formula." The monthly increases in water rates will be constantly divisible by P8 per cubic meter.

"The recovery period here is faster, but the increase would be fixed at P8 per cubic meter. If we implement this in May, by December the water rate charge for Cera alone will be P64 per cubic meter," an MWSS official said.

"This is a crucial decision that we have to make because I would not want us to be in a similar situation as the power crisis during the mid-1990s when we chose to abide by a popular decision that power rates should not go up," Tantiongco stressed. "We have to pay for better water services to avoid a water shortage in the next five to six years."

Wrong assumptions

MWSS administrator Jose Mabanta clarified, however, that it was not the government's obligation to relieve Manila Water and Maynilad of their financial burden.

"The concession agreements were signed three years ago and awarded to them in good faith, that they would be good and prudent businessmen. They, as concessionaires, have accepted the fact when they bid on this project that they are supposed to have enough resources to cover a lot of eventualities, among which is the sudden fluctuations in the exchange rate," Mabanta told the INQUIRER.

Some analysts familiar with the issue said the tight fix and financial woes now being experienced by Manila Water and Maynilad could also be due to wrong financial assumptions. They said the two firms offered rates lower than necessary during the bidding for the concessions.

Former Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla said Manila Water, in particular, tendered bids that were only half of those submitted by other bidders.

Medalla and two other economists at the University of the Philippines were tapped by the MWSS to determine the proper relief for Manila Water and Maynilad.

"They bid low because they were aggressive. They used the most optimistic scenario when they made their offer for the water concession in the light of the bright economic prospects then," Medalla said.

But it was apparently in the area of financial forecasts, which were deemed more important than operational projections, where the bidders faltered.

Medalla said Manila Water and Maynilad used financial assumptions that were no longer applicable. The former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority said the concessionaires apparently used the most optimistic financial scenario.

Manila Water and Maynilad did not take into account in their forecasts the possibility that the Asia-Pacific region would suffer a currency meltdown or that a sitting president could be ousted through another People Power movement. Unfortunately for the concessionaires, both events happened, causing the peso to slide to as low as 56 to a dollar and interest rates to shoot up. That effectively doubled their dollar-denominated debts.

"If I were to bid, I will use the worst scenario. They decided on the strategy of using the most optimistic scenario, and they are now losing money," Medalla said. "If they bid on that basis, that's their fault. They were wrong. We should not protect them from their mistakes."

Non-revenue water

Financial records obtained by the INQUIRER showed that the concessionaires' cash-flow problems were also coming from a very high percentage of "non-revenue water," or NRW, caused by illegal or faulty connections.

The cash deficit claimed by Manila Water and Maynilad came from high NRWs, resulting in low operating revenues. The two firms cited NRW targets that they had been unable to meet since 1997.

Manila Water targeted to bring down its NRW by 44 percent in 1997. It ended up with an NRW rate of 45.2 percent, which meant that it did not profit from nearly half the water it distributed.

In 1998, Manila Water's NRW target was 31 percent; it chalked up 38.8 percent. In 1999, the target was raised to 39.8 percent from an earlier assumption of 22 percent.

Maynilad, on the other hand, had hoped to keep its NRW at 42 percent in 1999, but ended with 67 percent.

"For the past two years, Maynilad was unable to bring down its NRW beyond the 60-percent levels, which means that only 40 percent of the water they produce are delivered to end consumers. This explains their low monthly collections," an MWSS official said. "Unrealized revenues through unbilled water added up to billions of pesos in losses for the companies."

These poor NRW rates were reflected in Maynilad's low level of operating revenues from 1997 to 1999. During this period, Maynilad posted operating revenues far below its target of P7.255 billion at P4.792 billion.

For Manila Water, actual operating revenues from 1997 to 1999 stood at P2.721 billion. Its target was P3.179 billion.

Mabanta, the MWSS administrator, said when Manila Water and Maynilad hooked up with companies abroad, they knew they had to work hard first to improve facilities handed to them before they could make money out of their concessions.

Maynilad vice president for finance Francis Gilles Puno said Manila Water and Maynilad were unable to sustain their capital expenditure program "because we could barely settle the previous ones."

Mabanta said despite their current losses, Manila Water and Maynilad would eventually turn in decent profits, "but it would take time."

He said other than the auto-Cera, the MWSS was exploring other ways to prop up its concessionaires' bottom lines without jacking up water rates.

"We were advised by no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo and her Cabinet to devise new ways that should be within what was agreed upon in the concession agreements. She did not like the auto-Cera, which could be a major change in the agreements," a ranking MWSS official revealed.

Solutions

Mabanta said the 25-year concession agreements continued to bind the MWSS and its concessionaires. "It still holds water," he said.

He stressed that the public was assured that Manila Water and Maynilad would not rake in profits beyond the fair rate of return indicated in their bids.

"There is however, a need to amend weak provisions," MWSS chief regulator Tantiongco said.

The MWSS Regulatory Office is now reviewing provisions covering rate adjustment procedures, setting up of penalties in case of failure to meet obligations, creation of a reserve fund for projects, reconciliation of public demand against abilities to meet them.

On the issue of rate setting, there are disputes on how expenses will be recognized, specifically on whether cash flows should be actual or projected.

The MWSS Regulatory Office and the concessionaires also have to agree on what will be the basis for determining the effect of the peso's devaluation. Manila Water and Maynilad are insisting that the depreciation effect must be claimed against the committed amount, but regulators say these should be claimed only against actual expenses.

A system of penalties in cases of failure to meet service obligations also has to be in place as the existing provision is "too general," according to Tantiongco.

Multilateral agencies also see a need to strengthen the MWSS Regulatory Office. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development has extended a technical assistance project to help the agency assess the concessionaires' performance. This project, dubbed as "Public Performance Assessment," will help strengthen the capabilities of the MWSS Regulatory Office to monitor the services being provided by Manila Water and Maynilad.

"This would be in line with our mandate to monitor and evaluate the water concessionaires' service obligations. This PPA mechanism, which the World Bank, through the IBRD, would help establish, would complement the traditional monitoring and enforcement mechanisms of our local water utility firms," Tantiongco said.

The PPA will cover the delivery of potable water to customers, as well as maintenance of wastewater services, sewer connections and sanitation services.

Although the two concessionaires welcome this performance-based evaluation system, Manila Water has expressed concern that it might serve as a tool against them.

"We knew that there would be some complaints aired by unsatisfied customers, but as surveys are perceived these days, we hope that it should not put the company down. We hope to improve our service through this program," Manila Water president Antonino Aquino said.

Canon to invest ₱350M in Philippine subsidiary

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

CANON Singapore Pte. Ltd. said yesterday it would invest over P350 million in its Philippine subsidiary—more than twice its previous budget—to meet its sales target this year.

In a news conference, Canon Singapore regional marketing manager Hiroshi Hara said Canon Marketing Philippines Inc. should chalk up about P1.1 billion in sales this year.

Canon is one of the world's leading producers of cameras, copiers, fax machines, printers and scanners.

"We were given the go-signal for an additional capitalization to intensify our marketing strategies in the local market. It would help capture our original target to reach the No. 1 spot, especially in the sale of bubble jet printers and copiers," Canon Philippines manager Felipe Ornopia told reporters.

Canon is placing more money in the Philippines to make up for its decision to place an overseas production facility outside the country that would have generated some P1.3 billion in new investments and 2,500 jobs.

Canon decided to build a factory elsewhere because of political uncertainties that hit the country last year.

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Pre-need industry grew 5.3% in 2000

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE PRE-NEED plan industry grew 5.3 percent last year as new sales in terms of gross contract price reached P32.735 billion in 2000 from P31.093 billion in 1999.

Records of the Securities and Exchange Commission showed that education and pension plans accounted for 95 percent of the market last year.

Some P15.62 billion worth of education plans and another P15.62 billion worth of pension plans were sold last year, according to the SEC's records.

Sales of education plans grew 10.2 percent while pension plans chalked up a 3-percent sales growth.

Life plans accounted for only 4.5 percent, or P1.49 billion, of the market last year. Sales of these plans slipped from P1.815 billion in 1999.

The top three sellers of education plans last year were College Assurance Plans, with sales posted at P6.1 billion; Berkley International Corp., P3.6 billion; and Philam Plans Inc., P1.5 billion.

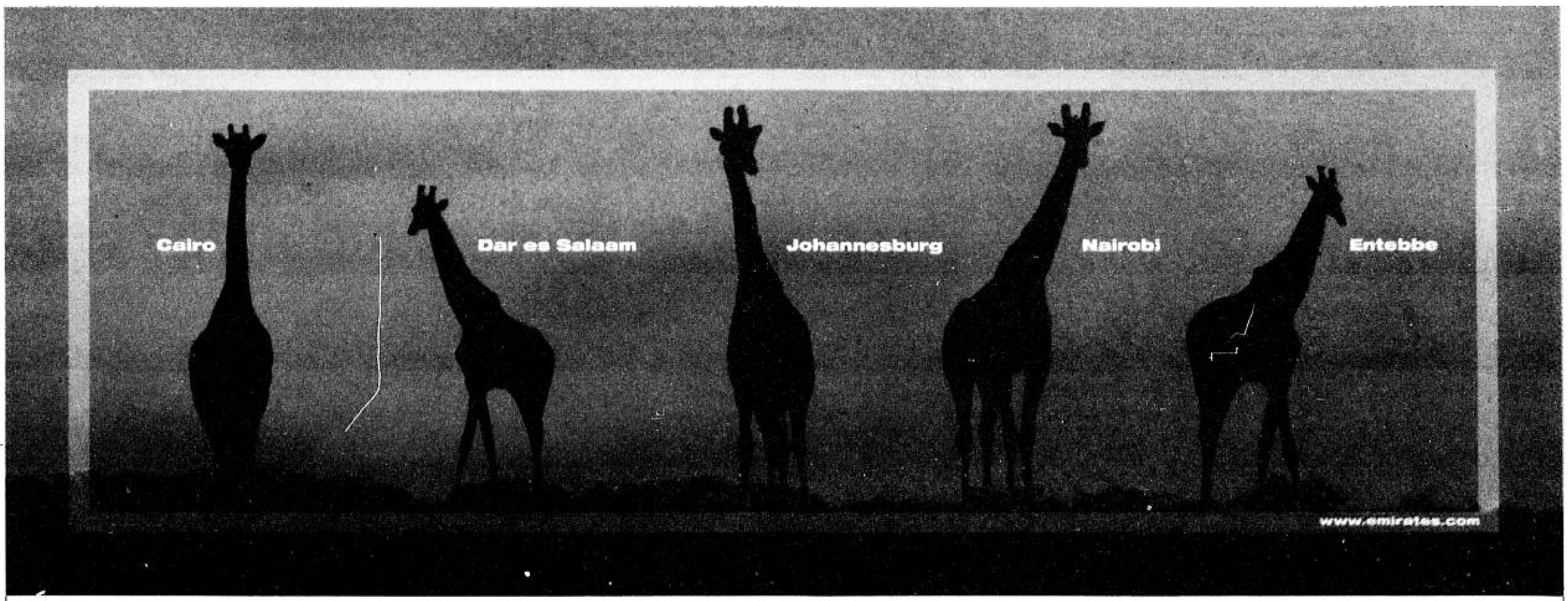
The top pre-need plan companies in the pension plans category were Philam Plans, P2.822 billion; Prudential Life Pension Plan Inc., P2.809 billion; and the CAP group's Comprehensive Annuity Plans and Pension Corp., P2.557 billion.

Prudential Life led in terms of sales of life or memorial plans with total sales of P290 million last year.

The health of the pre-need industry was put in question last year when several pre-need companies failed because of bad trust fund investments and unrealistic assumptions.

The SEC last year acted to address the problem with a circular restricting pre-need companies' trust funds investments and increasing the amount of required paid-up capital.

These reforms, however, are being resisted by the Philippine Federation of Pre-need Plan Companies Inc., the association of the country's 56 active pre-need plan companies.



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Our Dearly Beloved

Vicente S. Dy

Peacefully joined his Creator on Monday, March 12, 2001 at the age of 71.

His bereaved wife **Elena (Ngo)**; children **Rosemary** and **Adolfo, Selwyn** and **Zorayda, Marie Eve** and **Carl, Maritess** and **Romy, Roland** and **Jeane, Marilain** and **Hector**; together with grandchildren, brothers, sisters and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Oro Memorial Homes, Legaspi City.

Interment will be on March 20, 2001 at 12:00 noon at Legaspi Filipino Chinese Charitable Cemetery Bogtong, Legaspi City.

(Those who will attend the interment are requested to proceed to Oro Memorial Homes, Legaspi City at 12:00 noon.)

Atty. Francisco Paredes Ubaldo

Former Region 3 Coordinator and
Assistant Manager, Social Security System

Died on March 15, 2001 after a lingering illness.

His bereaved wife **Soledad V. Ubaldo**; sisters and brothers-in-law, nephews, niece and grandchildren requests your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Paco Catholic Church Mortuary, Paz Street, Paco, Manila.

Interment will take place on Sunday, March 18, 2001 at the North Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

PATROCINIO YABAO BRACAMONTE

November 8, 1930 - March 14, 2001

Now peacefully rest in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord.

His loving wife Rosario Menchavez Bracamonte; children Luthgarda, Lida, Luisito, Loida, Luzer, Lenerma, Ladimer, Lilybeth, Lazarito; sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies at the family residence at B17 L6 Kaunlaran Village, Navotas, Metro Manila.

Interment will be at Eternity Memorial Garden, Bacoor, Cavite.

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I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14-65:4-5

AURORA CARDIÑO DE CASTRO

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 16, 2001 at the age of 69.

Her bereaved husband **Ireneo**; stepdaughters and sons, sisters **Gloria, Leonie, Norma, Editha**; brothers **Jaime, Ernesto, Mike** and **Nonong**; sisters- and brothers-in-law, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 18, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, my servant also will be.

John 12:16

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Pabayo-Pacana Streets, Cagayan de Oro City
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Babasahin ATBP.
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Davao City
Ground Floor, Victoria Plaza, Bajada
Davao City
Tel. No. (082) 221-3927/227-4410
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GSC Newscenter, Dimalanta Building
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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

E-MAIL: aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
sprojects@inquirer.com.ph

Text messaging the way to 3G-like services

THE BEST route to the high-tech world of 3rd generation wireless services is through humble text messaging, the head of the Philippines' largest mobile phone company said in a recent CNBC-Asia interview.

"This (text messaging) is the best preparation for the higher levels of technology. In a way, we are creating the 3G environment on SMS," said Napoleon Nazareno, Smart president and CEO.

The CNBC-Asia interview was shown in New Company, the newest program of the international business news network showcasing companies that are innovating to the challenges and opportunities of the digital business age.

3G is the next generation of mobile communications that allows for faster transmission speeds from 114 kbps up to 2 Mbps, making possible high-speed data communications and mobile services such as video conferencing, audio streaming and mobile Internet.

SMS (Short Messaging System), on the other hand, is the GSM Phase 1 standard technology that allows users to send and receive text messages to and from mobile phones. The text can comprise of words or numbers or an alphanumeric combination.

Interviewed by award-winning broadcaster Martin Soong, Nazareno said that text messaging is popular in the Philippines because of its affordability and efficiency. A text message in the country costs 1.5 US cents compared to 18 US cents per message in Europe. He also said SMS is suited to the non-confrontational culture of Filipinos who have no difficulty typing out messages on the keypads of cellular phones.

During the height of the protest movements last January, Nazareno said Smart processed 70 million messages on an in-and-out basis.

Smart has been developing various value-added services that can be accessed through test messaging and wireless applications protocol (WAP). It recently launched Smart zed, its mobile portal, enhanced its mobile banking service and introduced Smart Money, the first electronic payments cash card linked to a mobile phone which recently won the Most Innovative Wireless GSM Service for Customers during the 3GSM World Congress in Cannes, France.

INVESTMENT AGREEMENT SIGNING

"Information and communication technology will play a key role in the development thrust of the new administration." This was revealed by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the investment agreement signing between E-Store Exchange.com, the country's first virtual mall; Mitsui and Company, Japan's largest trading firm; Boston Ventures Partners, funds manager for IT-related activities; and GMA Network, Inc., the country's most awarded television channel. Also present at the signing are (from left) E-Store Exchange.com chair Patrick Go, Department of Trade and Industry secretary Manuel Roxas III, E-Store Exchange.com president and CEO JJ Soriano and Mitsui and Company's general manager for corporate administration division, Hitoshi Takabatake.

WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY AWARDS

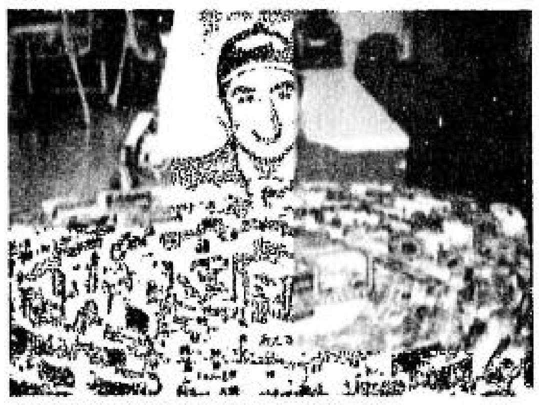
The Soroptimist International Philippines Region held the judging of its Women's Opportunity Awards Program at the residence of governor Tes Choa. Seated (from left) Ana Marie Nemenzo; Leila S. Salgado; Nella Gonzales; and Dandy Gomez. Not in photo is the 5th judge, Lawyer Felicidad Gido. Standing (from left) governor elect Dolly Flores; Immediate Past Gov. Nena Nolido; WOA chair Linda Aquino; governor Tes Choa; past governor Gladys Tiongco. Winners were candidates to Metro Davao, Iligan and Aklan.

The hottest destination in Pampanga

The Worlds of Fun Game Center on the third floor of SM City Pampanga is hard to resist. The store's bright, colored interiors are complemented by a high-tech-looking illuminated ceiling. True to its trademark, Worlds of Fun Pampanga spells fun and excitement for the entire family as it always has something to offer everyone, be it for adults, teenagers, or growing kids.

The big boys, who must have their regular dose of interactive games, should find a virtual heaven at Worlds of Fun. There's a wide array of games to test their skills, like the basketball "Sharp Shooter" where players can actually compete with each other. For video game enthusiasts there's "Marvel Vs Capcom II" and "Tekken Tag" and "Point Blank 2."

Along with the many attractions are the popular Redemption Machines—where players can collect tickets to exchange for special gifts and prizes. Redemption Machines include the "Hungry Hippo" where colorful balls are fed to hippos as fast as possible. "Smack N' Alien" players hit heads of alien creatures with a cushioned hammer as fast as they can. The "Cyclone," "Double Chance," "UFO Catcher," and the latest arrival, the "Drill O Matic," dispens toys and candies.



HOTWHEELS COLLECTOR

Onemig Bondoc, the matinee idol who starred in the hit television series T.G.I.S., recently signed an exclusive agreement with Richwell Trading Corporation as official endorser of Hotwheels and Matchbox this season. For 2001, Onemig Bondoc will be known as the "Hotwheels Man." Onemig is scheduled to tour malls in Metro Manila to sign autographs and pose for pictures with legions of showbiz, and Hotwheels and Matchbox, fans.

CABLE CONGRESS EXHIBITOR

CYO International, Inc. signs up as an exhibitor at the 2nd International Cable Congress and Exhibition to be held on March 22-24 at the Philippine Trade Training Center, Manila. This yearly event is being hosted by the Federation of International Cable TV Association of the Philippines (Ficap), based in 15 geographical regions all over the Philippines. Ficap members are composed of small and medium cable TV entrepreneurs operating in cities and first class municipalities. CYO International provides a complete line of cable/TV equipment such as satellite dish antennas, satellite receivers and IDRs, coaxial cables, power supply, pole hardware and materials, fiber optics cable, and optical nodes. CYO also offers professional technical support and services. Shown in photo are (from left) Melissa Guerrero of CYO International; Estrellita Juliano-Tamano, national chair of Ficap; Chiqui Yujuico, president of CYO International; and Cecile M. Dy, Ficap second International Cable Congress and exhibit convention chair.

BITS Clips

Open your 3rd eye

LEARN the art of prophecy by opening the Third Eye. Know what will come in the future. Discover the science of meditation. A seminar on "Prophecies and Opening the Third Eye" will be held today, 1 to 5 p.m. at the PCED Hostel, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City. For reservations, contact Order of the Naga Brahmas at telefax 924-2175.

Delta Faucet @ Worldbex

DELTA Faucet Company, the top faucet brand in the United States, is participating in the 6th Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex 2001) on March 14-18, 2001 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. Delta Faucet is showcasing some of their most innovative faucet lines, including the latest Delta Synergy Line. Worldbex 2001 is considered as Asia's largest and most attended construction exposition.

NTF 2001 ongoing

SOME 186 manufacturers from all over the country is participating in the 9th National Trade Fair (NTF) March 14-18, 2001at the Megatrade Halls of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. NTF 2001 unveils a thousand product prototypes on furniture and home accents, processed food, holiday décor, ornamental plants and personal accessories which participating manufacturers have developed resulting from assistance provided by DTI's Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (PDDCP). For queries, contact the DTI-Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion at 890-4877 and 890-4933 or email bdtp@dti.gov.ph.

Araw ng Dabaw concert

BOMBO Radyo Philippines successfully held its "Handog ng Bombo Radyo at Star FM sa Araw ng Dabaw" free concert, free T-shirt extravaganza yesterday at the PTA Grounds, Palma Gil St. in Davao City yesterday during the Araw ng Dabaw celebrations. Star-studded celebrities such as Priscilla Almeda, Isabel Granada and Renz Verano performed at the concert.

PMA on brand management

THE PHILIPPINE Marketing Association, Inc. (PMA) has organized a seminar on brand management to teach participants the right job perspective and orientation on the brand management function. The seminar is set on March 19, 21 and 23, 1-6 p.m. at the Acceed Center in Makati City. The 6-session seminar will discuss the key fundamental skills in brand management function. For registration and inquiries, call the PMA Secretariat at 893-7127, 813-0466, and 892-3144.

Alumni afternoon gathering

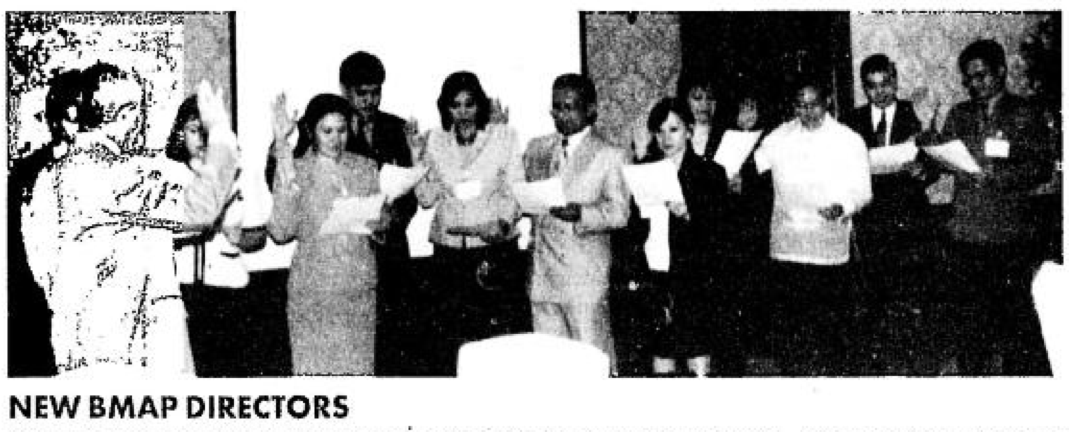
THE MANILA High School Class '59 invites all its members to an afternoon gathering today at 3 p.m. at the Manila High School grounds on Muralla St., Intramuros, Manila. For particulars, call Rudy de la Cruz at 0917-9601442 or (046)431-1336, Johnny Gotladera at 527-4741 or 890-7340, or Higgy Simpliciano at 920-0734; 921-6516 or 0917-8168468.

MOST OUTSTANDING TEACHER

On March 1, the search for the most outstanding teachers for 2000-2001 in Filipino culminated with Marilyn M. Lalunio of Benigno S. Aquino High School garnering first place, Ana Marie M. Malit of Assumption College taking second place and Corazon B. Yumol of Don Bosco Technical Institute taking third place. The search is a joint project of the Rotary Club of Makati West and the Rotary Club of Makati Dasmariñas. The awarding ceremony was held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Photo shows, from left: Ernie Fajardo, president of Rotary Club of Makati West; Patt Lontoc, president of Rotary Club of Makati Dasmarinas; guest speaker DECS Undersecretary Dr Isagani Cruz; District 3830 governor Jun Perez; and first place winner Marilyn Lalunio.

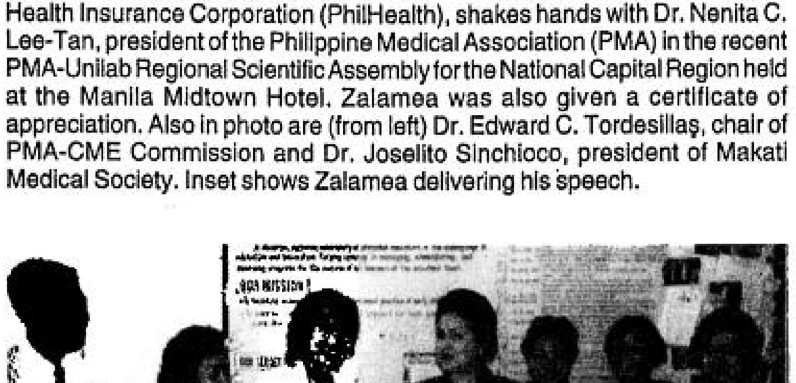
PHILHEALTH CEO AT SCIENCE ASSEMBLY

Enrique M. Zalamea, president and chief executive officer of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), shakes hands with Dr. Nenita C. Lee-Tan, president of the Philippine Medical Association (PMA) in the recent PMA-Unilab Regional Scientific Assembly for the National Capital Region held at the Manila Midtown Hotel. Zalamea was also given a certificate of appreciation. Also in photo are (from left) Dr. Edward C. Tordesillas, chair of PMA-CME Commission and Dr. Joselito Sinchioco, president of Makati Medical Society. Inset shows Zalamea delivering his speech.



NEW BMAP DIRECTORS

Former Representative Gary Teves (far left, back to the camera), president and CEO of Landbank, inducts the new directors of the Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines (BMAP) in ceremonies held recently at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City. BMAP is composed of bank marketing professionals from the country's leading banks. Being inducted are (from left) Maureen Abelardo (Equitable PCIBank/Skoal Advertising, Inc.); Catherine A. Alonso (Philippine Savings Bank); Yolanda M. Albano (Allied Bank); Roberto Banaag (Planters Development Bank); Jazmin Buñag (Metrobank); Geronimo Diaz (Banco de Oro); Veronica Tapia-Merk (BPI); Amylyn De Quiros (Landbank); Jorge V. Angeles (Philippine Veterans Bank); Ferdinand La Chica (East West Banking Corp.); and Allan Tumbaga (RCBC).



FIRST BADMINTON TOURNEY

Premiere City Club, the hottest spa and fitness center in New Manila, Quezon City, launched its 1st invitational badminton tournament dubbed Smash 2001. The overall champs in the men's doubles were Paul Chiu and Alex Cuevas of the Frisco Badminton Team. Vanessa Tanco and Michelle de Jesus of the Manila Polo Club Badminton Team were champs for women's doubles. Smash 2001 was sponsored by Sub Zero, Uratex, Orbitz Pearl Shakes, StandOut Motors and Sports House.

PROGRAMMING GRAND FINALISTS

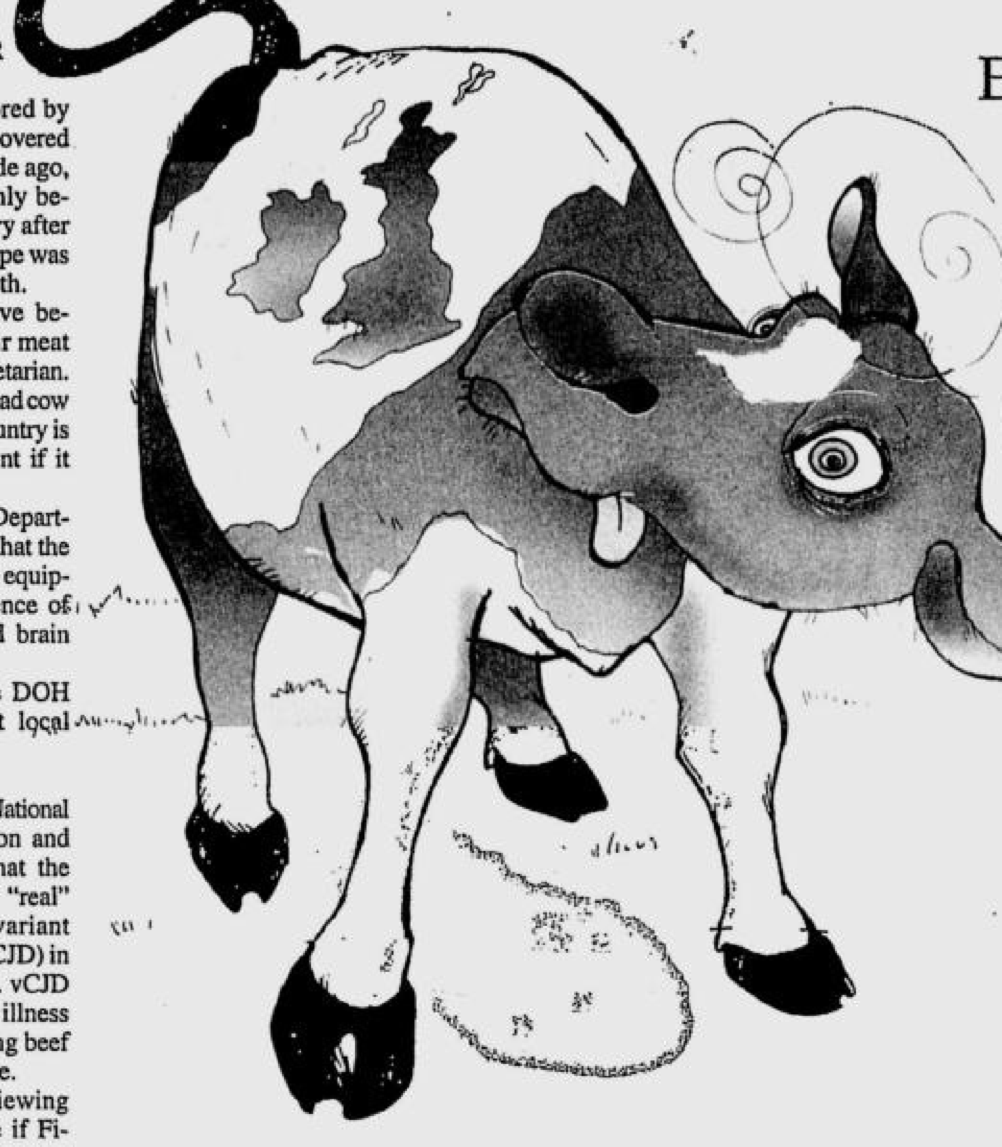
Trend Micro Inc., the worldwide leader in Internet content security, recently concluded its 3-day grand finals of the country's first-of-its-kind computer programming contest "Trend Internet/Network Software." Photo shows Trend Micro employees and the six teams that vied for the P1-million grand prize. The winners were announced March 1 at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati in an affair attended by Trend Micro founder and Chair Steve Chang. The contest is aimed to promote and develop the potentials of the Filipino youth in the highly specialized fields of information and communication technology.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor ■ STELLA O. GONZALES, Assistant Editor

Mad cow invades RP consciousness

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR



Exactly how mad cow disease has infected humans is not yet clear

AFTER HAVING been ignored by Filipinos since it was first discovered in England more than a decade ago, mad cow disease has suddenly become a by-word in the country after a shipment of meat from Europe was intercepted in Cebu last month.

Paranoid meat lovers have become more conscious of their meat intake, with some turning vegetarian.

With this mad frenzy over mad cow disease, one wonders if the country is prepared to handle the ailment if it ever reaches Philippine soil.

First the bad news, the Department of Health has admitted that the government does not have the equipment to determine the presence of the mad cow disease-caused brain ailment in humans.

Now the good news, the DOH has assured consumers that local meat is safe.

'Real' threat

Dr. Eric Tayag of the DOH National Center for Disease Prevention and Control told the INQUIRER that the threat of mad cow disease is "real" and its association with variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) in humans has been established. vCJD is the degenerative mental illness believed to be caused by eating beef infected with mad cow disease.

The DOH, he said, is reviewing patient records to determine if Filipinos have already been afflicted with the disease. He added that there are no verified reports yet.

"But this does not mean that we should be overly confident," he said.

Tayag added that as a precaution, those who have been to Europe from1986 onward and who stayed there for at least six months would not be allowed to donate blood.

Risk reduction

The DOH, Tayag assured, is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta in the United States to properly address the issues on the human risk for mad cow disease. He explained that quarantine and destruction of sick herds and other measures have significantly cut the risk for the spread of mad cow disease in animals.

Risk reduction measures include the ban on imported meat and meat products from mad cow disease-infected countries and a ban on importation of livestock and bone meal from these countries. The Department of Agriculture banned the import of beef from several European countries last November.

Assurance

Tayag allayed fears that Filipinos have already been exposed to infected beef and will become sick. He said that until recently, mad cow disease has been confined to England and most of Philippine beef imports come from mad cow-free countries.

"Our meat is safe. We do not have mad cow disease," Tayag said.

Local livestock are indigenous or are imported from Australia, a mad cow disease-free country.

Number of reported cases of mad cow disease worldwide

	Belgium	Denmark	France	Germany	Ireland	Italy	Liechten	Luxem	Nether	Portugal	Spain	Switzer	UK
1989	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,228
1990	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	14,407
1991	0	0	5	0	17	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	25,359
1992	0	1	0	1	18	0	0	0	0	1	0	15	37,280
1993	0	0	1	0	16	0	0	0	0	3	0	29	35,090
1994	0	0	4	3	19	1	0	0	0	12	0	64	24,436
1995	0	0	3	0	16	0	0	0	0	14	0	68	14,562
1996	0	0	12	0	73	0	0	0	0	29	0	45	8,149
1997	1	0	6	2	80	0	0	1	2	30	0	38	4,393
1998	6	0	18	0	83	0	2	0	2	106	0	14	3,235
1999	3	0	31	0	91	0	0	0	2	170	0	50	2,301
2000	9	0	161	7	145	0	0	0	2	142	2	33	1,101

SOURCE : OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES EPIZOOTIES

Dietary risk factors for vCJD

Reported consumption of different types of meat

	% of cases (n=51)	% of controls (n=27)
Beef	98	96
Sausages	88	93
Burgers	88	88
Meat pies	86	87
Venison	25	22
Veal	18	35
Brain	0	4

Note: the analyses are based on datafrom 51 vCJD cases and 27 controls (individuals who were referred to the surveillance unit but who subsequently recovered, or developed another pathological diagnosis, or are thought very unlikely to be vCJD cases

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL CJD SURVEILLANCE UNIT, UNITED KINGDOM

Frequency of consumption of burgers, meat pies and sausages

Frequency of consumption	% of cases (n=51)	% of controls (n+27)
< 1/ month	10	19
once a month or more	39	41
more than once per week	51	41

Note: Three cases (6%) and three (15%) controls reported that they had been vegetarians for a period of at least one year

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL CJD SURVEILLANCE UNIT, UNITED KINGDOM

He said the CDC estimates that the risk for vCJD following consumption of contaminated meat at this time is one for every 10 billion servings.

Tayag said that if control measures were done successfully and remain efficient, then the epidemic could be contained in the next five to 10 years.

"The long incubation period of vCJD does not allow us to be overly confident even with the declining number of reported cases. It is possible that a genetic predisposition exists but this still remains unclear. The discovery of a screening test for mad cow disease, if ever there will be one, is very important to allow us to have more accurate estimates of the disease," he said.

Tayag said that apart from vCJD, Filipinos should take a closer look at other devastating diseases that they may not have been paying attention to. He pointed out that every day, 75 Filipinos die of tuberculosis. The physical effects of smoking have become so dangerous, yet the country has continuously denied it as a problem.

"It is true that we are always scared of the unknown, but once we have gathered facts, we dismiss everything. We cannot afford that for diseases such as HIV/AIDS," he said.

'MAD' FACTS

- "Mad cow disease" is a fatal disease in cattle, not humans. First detected in 1985 by a veterinarian contacted by a farmer in England who was puzzled by the behavior of one of his cows. In 1986, Britain's Central Veterinary Laboratory identified the disease as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). "Spongiform" because the brains of infected cattle become spongy or full of holes.
- When people talk of getting "mad cow disease," they actually mean variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD), a fatal degenerative brain disease in humans that scientists believe could be due to exposure to BSE, most likely by eating BSE-infected cattle. Exactly how BSE crossed species to infect humans in the form of vCJD has yet to be scientifically established.
- vCJD patients experience depression and sometimes a schizophrenia-like psychosis. Unusual sensory symptoms, such as "stickiness" of the skin, have also been experienced. Unsteadiness, difficulty in walking and involuntary movements develop as the illness progresses. By the time of death, patients become completely immobile and mute.
- vCJD was first described in March 1996. It is called "variant" CJD because the ailment CJD had been in existence since 1920. CJD is a rare disease that occurs mainly during the fifth and sixth decades of life, there is an estimated annual incidence of one case per million people.

Countries/ Territories having reported cases of BSE only in imported animals

Country / Territory	Number of cases	Date of initial detection
Canada	1	November 1993
Falkland Islands	1	1989
Oman	2	cases confirmed in 1989

SOURCE : OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES EPIZOOTIES

- In contrast to the traditional form of CJD, vCJD has affected younger patients (average age 29 years, as opposed to 65 years), has a relatively longer duration of illness (median of 14 months, as opposed to 4.5 months) and is strongly linked to exposure, probably through food, to BSE.
- From October 1996 to early December 2000, 87 vCJD cases were reported in the United Kingdom, three in France, and one in Ireland. The first person to develop vCJD became ill in January 1994. One victim had been a vegetarian for 12 years.
- There is no sufficient information available at present to predict the future number of vCJD cases. What factors affect whether a human will contract the disease are not yet known.
- In February 2000, a baby born to a mother with vCJD was found to have contracted the disease.
- There is no available completely reliable diagnostic test that could be used before the onset of clinical symptoms of vCJD. The disease can only be confirmed in a post-mortem pathological examination of the brain.
- It is not yet clear if vCJD could be transmitted through blood although animal studies in 1997 suggest that this is possible. Some of the vCJD victims in the UK have donated blood. The UK has instituted several measures to ensure that blood from all donors is safe.
- How BSE developed in cattle is another question that has to be fully established. It is believed that it was caused by animal carcasses or offal processed into cattle feed.
- BSE is associated with a still unknown transmissible agent. The agent affects the brain and spinal cord of cattle. The agent is highly stable, resisting freezing, drying and heating at normal cooking temperatures, even those used for pasteurization and sterilization.
- The nature of this BSE agent is still a matter of debate. Some believe the agent is prion, a self-replicating protein that lingers in the tissue for many years before any symptoms emerge. Some say the agent is virus-like and possesses nucleic acids that carry genetic information.
- The brain and spinal cord are believed to be the main reservoirs for prions. Humans can acquire the BSE prion through cuts of meat that contain this material. This has yet to be satisfactorily proven by experts.
- Since 1989 when the first BSE case was reported outside the UK, small numbers of BSE cases have also been reported in native cattle in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Republic of Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland. It has also been reported in Canada, the Falkland Islands, Italy and Oman but solely in animals imported from the UK.
- BSE can be transferred from cow to calf, and offsprings inherit susceptibility to infection.
- In 1988, the British government banned feeding of protein derived from ruminants (e.g., cattle, sheep and goats) to any ruminant. Infected cattle were incinerated. The use in the food chain of bovine offals considered to pose a potential risk to humans was banned in the UK in 1989.
- Milk and milk products are considered safe. Tallow and gelatin are considered safe if prepared by a manufacturing process that has been shown experimentally to inactivate the BSE agent.
- No form of infection has been detected in skeletal muscle tissue. Removal of visible nervous and lymphatic tissue from meat could provide reassurance to consumers.
- Human and veterinary vaccines prepared from bovine materials may carry the risk of transmission of animal spongiform encephalopathy agents. The pharmaceutical industry has been advised to avoid the use of bovine materials and materials from other animal species where spongiform encephalopathy naturally occurs. These
- precautions apply to the manufacture of cosmetics as well.

(Sources: World Health Organization, British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Office International des Epizooties)

First skin bank will open soon

THE PHILIPPINE General Hospital-Burn Unit in cooperation with the Burn Foundation of the Philippines, the Philippine Society for Burn Injuries and the Philippine Band of Mercy will soon open the country's first skin bank at PGH, Dr. Jeane J. Azarcon, PGH Burn Unit director, disclosed.

Azarcon said the Skin Bank of the Philippines aims to facilitate the donation, processing and storage of human skin to be used for severely burned patients to speed up their recovery and save lives.

Banked skin, or allografts, according to Azarcon, is used in the treatment of patients with massive injuries where there are no available skin to be used to cover wounds. The skin taken from qualified donor cadavers (24 hours after death) is harvested, treated and banked in a special facility by trained personnel. The processed skin will be ready for transfer onto a burn patient.

The physical structure of the skin bank consisting of an office and processing room has just been completed. The Philippine Band of Mercy donated shakers and other processing equipment.

Information regarding the skin bank may be obtained at the PGH-Burn Unit or Azarcon at Tel. No. 526-6949.

Chemical engineer named DOST head

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed University of the Philippines professor Estrella Alabastro as secretary of the Department of Science and Technology. She is the first woman to get the DOST portfolio.

Alabastro returns to the DOST with a solid background as a science and technology administrator, academician and researcher. She was DOST undersecretary for research and development from 1995 to 1998 and was chair of the National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines and project director of the DOST-World Bank Engineering and Science Education Project.

She earned her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from UP Diliman in 1961 and her master's in chemical engineering and doctorate in the same field from the Rice University in Houston, Texas.

Alabastro was honored in 1997 as most outstanding alumna of the UP College of Engineering. She is currently president of the Philippine Association of Food Technologists and teaches at the UP College of Home Economics and UP Technology Management Center.

The new DOST secretary is expected to push for stronger science and technology human resource development, science and mathematics education, bigger research and development fund and to focus on information and communications technology.

S&T Media Service

Pediatricians convention slated March 21-22

THE PHILIPPINE Ambulatory Pediatric Association (Papa) announces its 6th Annual Convention titled "The Child, the Environment and Health Issues." The convention will be held from March 21to 22 at the Century Park Sheraton.

Dr. Abraham Bergman, chief of pediatrics of Harbor View Medical Center in Seattle, Washington and past president of the Ambulatory Pediatric Association, USA has been invited to share his expertise.

The program is aimed at pediatricians, general practitioners, school physicians and allied medical professionals.

Topics in plenary sessions and symposiums include environmental health hazards, how safe is the air we breathe (carbon monoxide, cigarette smoke), and how safe is our food (bromate, dioxin, bottled water). Other topics are household toxins, hyperreactive airways, tuberculosis, animal and insect bites, drowning, burns, photodamage, link between public health and pediatrics, the pediatrician as an advocate for the protection of the child and the environment and infectious disease and the environment.

For inquiries, please call 721-1534 or e-mail: papaconvention@hotmail.com

Preventing the onset of cervical cancer

CERVICAL cancer ranks as the second most common type of cancer prevalent among the country's women population, a disease that caused a high mortality rate in the Philippines. But despite the high incidence of cervical cancer, women have yet to know the risk factors that contribute to the development of this dreaded disease

It is important to know the many factors that lead to the formation of cancer cells to avoid developing the disease. The most important risk factor is sexual promiscuity of either the woman, the male partner or both. This is because cervical cancer is associated with the presence of viruses, notably human papilloma virus, and the more numerous the sexual partner of the woman, or the male partner, the greater the risk of being exposed to virus.

Various steps have been taken to reduce the rate of cervical cancer among Filipino women, and educating them on the ways of early detection of this disease is one of them. The Department of Health, celebrating Women's Health this month, has intensified its information drive on this dreaded disease.

One of the many ways to detect cervical cancer, which the Department of Health staunchly advocates, is the Pap Smear test. An inexpensive test that women could avail even as outpatients, the Pap Smear is very effective tool in detecting and identifying preinvasive neoplastic conditions even in women who are not known to be prone to developing cervical cancer. Preinvasive means the stage in which the development of cancer cells has not yet made damage on good cells, thus giving hope that these malignant elements can still be removed.

The early detection of cancerous growths in a woman's body increases her chances of being cured. This is why regularly undergoing the Pap Smear test as prescribed by physician or gynecologist is important.

Ideally, upon reaching the age of 18 or after beginning sexual activities, women are advised to undergo a Pap Smear test. A routine Pap Smear test annually is recommended, and when a patient has three consecutive yearly negative smears, the physician can choose to do the smear every three years. However, if the woman is highly at risk in developing cancer, the smear may be done more often or yearly.

When a woman knows the risk factors that lead to the development of cervical cancer, and the steps to take in the early detection of this disease, her chances of avoiding the Big C increases. Thus, a healthy lifestyle, a knowledge of one's body and regular trips to the doctor is a woman's best bet to deter the onset of this disease.

UP IN SMOKE

Cigarettes and staying alive

BY THE CHARTER BUREAU

IF you're a smoker, before you light up your next stick, finish reading this article.

Many smokers don't give much thought to the reflex of lighting a cigarette. It's a simple act repeated constantly throughout the day, one stick after the other, until it becomes natural to think of a cigarette as essential as a drink of water or a plate of food. Smokers hardly realize that the nicotine contained in those cigarettes is an addictive drug, which reaches the brain faster than drugs that enter the body intravenously. And smokers become not only physically addicted to nicotine; they also link smoking with many social activities, making smoking a difficult habit to break.

Why quit smoking, one may ask, when practically everyone does anyway, despite the "alleged" risks? It's simple. Any substance that is breathed in affects our lungs, not to mention the other organs particularly the heart and the brain. Many of these substances can be hazardous and threaten the lungs' ability to work properly, and cigarette smoke and its toxins top the list.

'Not good for you'

Cigarette smoking is the major cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and lung cancer. When someone inhales cigarette smoke, irritating gases and particles cause one of the lungs' defenses—the cilia—to slow down. Even one puff on a cigarette slows the cilia, weakening the lungs' ability to defend themselves against infections. Cigarette smoke can also cause air passages to close up and make breathing more difficult. It causes chronic inflammation or swelling in the lungs, leading to chronic bronchitis. And cigarette smoke leads to destruction of lung tissue that occurs in emphysema. Smokers are also more prone to heart disease and stroke than nonsmokers. In fact, one in three smokers dies early because of his or her smoking.

Research also shows that secondhand smoke, the smoke from other people's cigarettes, can harm the health of nonsmokers. Breathing in another person's smoke can cause many breathing problems in children and cancer and heart disease in adults. So by smoking, you are not only putting your own health on the line, but endangering your loved ones' health as well.

Cigarettes are so easy to buy and so common in our everyday lives that many people think of them as "normal"—still more perceive smoking as "cool." But cigarettes are neither. The bottom line is that they are very addictive and eventually cause sickness and death.

Warning signs

According to the American Lung Association, the following are the most frequent warning signs of lung disease. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, discuss them with a doctor as soon as possible.

- **Chronic cough**—Any cough that has lasted a month is chronic. This is an important early symptom indicating something is wrong with your breathing system, regardless of your age.
- **Shortness of breath**—Shortness of breath that continues after a brief rest following normal exercise, or comes after little or no exertion, is not normal. Labored or difficult breathing, the feeling that it is hard to draw air into your lungs or breathe it out, is also a warning sign.
- **Chronic mucus production**—Mucus, or sputum, is produced by the lungs as a defense response to infection or irritants. If your mucus production has lasted a month, this could indicate lung disease.
- **Wheezing**—Noisy breathing or wheezing is a sign that something unusual is blocking the airways of your lungs or making the airways too narrow.
- **Coughing out blood**—If you are coughing out blood, the blood may be coming from your lungs or upper respiratory tracts. Whatever the source of the blood, it is a sign of a health problem.

Experts agree that your lungs are not healthy if you have any of these symptoms. You must have them checked out by a doctor. If you wait for symptoms to become severe, you have already lost valuable treatment time. Taking care of mild symptoms can actually be to your advantage. Even if you have only one of the symptoms of lung disease—chronic cough, shortness of breath or difficult breathing, mucus, wheezing, or frequent chest colds—you should see a doctor. Most lung diseases can be helped by treatment and can be reversed if caught early enough.

Another prevalent disease

The Surgeon General warning appearing on cigarette packs has publicized the risk of lung cancer, but there is another very prevalent disease smokers should know about. Cigarette smoking is the most important risk factor for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD. Approximately 80 to 90 percent of COPD cases are caused by smoking; a smoker is 10 times more likely than a nonsmoker to die of COPD. Cigarette smoking is the most important risk factor for COPD; it would, in fact, probably be a minor health problem if people did not smoke. But minor it certainly is not—the World Health Organization projects that by the year 2020, COPD will be the 4th leading cause of death and disability.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) consists primarily of two related diseases—chronic bronchitis and emphysema. In both diseases, there is chronic obstruction of the flow of air through the airways and out of the lungs, and the obstruction generally is permanent and progressive over time. At first there may be only a mild shortness of breath and occasional coughing. Then a chronic cough develops with clear, colorless sputum. As the disease progresses, the cough becomes more frequent and more and more effort is needed to get air into and out of the lungs. In later stages of the disease, the heart may be affected. Eventually death occurs when the function of the lungs and heart is no longer adequate to deliver oxygen to the body's organs and tissues.

Save your lungs

You cannot undo the damage already done by smoking, but you can prevent further deterioration of your lungs. COPD patients who still continue to smoke will get more infections and symptoms and will worsen, in spite of the best medical treatment. The only chance you have against developing more severe problems is to give up.

When smokers quit, within mere minutes of smoking that last cigarette, the body begins a series of remarkable changes. Twenty minutes after quitting, blood pressure decreases. Eight hours afterward, the carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal and the oxygen level in blood increases to normal.

After 48 hours, nerve endings in the lungs start re-growing and the ability to smell and taste is enhanced. As the weeks go by, lung function increases; coughing, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease.

Tips for quitting smoking

- Be aware that smokers have different experiences when they quit. They may feel sleepy or very excited, lightheaded, nervous or irritable. Or they might crave for tobacco or sweets or have headaches. Learn how to recognize, and manage your "withdrawal" symptoms.
- Be sure to get some exercise every day. For example, walking is a great way to reduce the stress of quitting. Exercise is a big boost toward feeling better, improving spirits and keeping trim.
- Get plenty of sleep, eat a balanced diet and drink lots of water. Ask family, friends and co-workers to help. Having someone to take a walk with or just listen can give a needed boost.
- Don't give up! Many smokers fail on their first attempt to stay off cigarettes. Try again—and again, if necessary—until you succeed at quitting. Think of how the health benefits of stopping smoking far outweigh its difficulties.
- If you are over 40, have been a smoker for many years, and experience symptoms like shortness of breath during simple everyday activities (climbing stairs, walking short distances) and a persistent cough with phlegm, you may be at risk for COPD. Seeking medical advice today is the first and crucial step in preventing more severe consequences—and prolonging your life.

(Charter is the acronym for Clinical Hypertension and Atherosclerosis Research on Therapies, Epidemiology and Risk-management. It is a nonstock, nonprofit foundation, which evaluates the impact of risk factors and interventions, particularly lifestyle changes on heart, lung and other diseases. It is based at the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital.)

Mathematics anxiety and the existence of God

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

I HAVE written about math anxiety several times, and here is still another request from M. Bugaoan [Apacible Street, UP Campus, Diliman; mhbugaoan@lycos.com]:

I am currently taking my masteral studies in education majoring in math in UP. I would like to ask if you have some related literature about the topic—the role of previous math teachers in creating math anxiety in students. This is my topic in a research proposal we are required to submit in one of our educational psychology subjects. I may use this as my thesis next year.

If you can suggest what design (experimental) I can use, then please do so. I don't know how to do experimental designs and I would appreciate if you could help.

I have read your books and articles and had fun trying to answer the puzzles, and apparently, you are most concerned with math learning I know you can help me because your articles include self-help suggestions on how not to be afraid of math.

As you have noted, I have written extensively on math anxiety in my articles and books, and you can use those as part of your review of literature. There are also quite a number of research papers done on this topic (local and international). Why don't you go to the library in UP and look for some? The Ateneo library also has some theses about math learning. The Internet has loads of sites on math learning, and a lot of them focus on math anxiety. You should have no problem looking for good sites.

As for designs, you have to be the one to think about that. I cannot do your homework for you here, and besides, what design to use depends on the research questions you have. Experimental designs are just one of many possibilities, and if you don't know what they are, enroll in a course on research. As a graduate student of education, you should be familiar with the different designs at hand. You should also have an adviser, who will guide you in your research. Make sure to get an adviser who will often be there for you, and not someone who is barely available throughout the year. Good luck!

* * *

Let us now look at a theological question by K. Sagana [ksagana@yahoo.com]:

I learn a lot from your columns, but still there are lots of questions to be answered. I hope you can spend a little time with me, for I am very confused. Is there a god? Is he supernatural or supertechnological? Can we experience a dimension with no time and space? Thank you.

Your questions are not in the realm of science anymore, but involve faith and religion. Thus, I cannot answer them the way I can the previous question. Personally, I believe in God (the Christian God), so for me, there is a god. However, I cannot prove this scientifically, and I won't even try. You might want to look at what Saints Aquinas and Augustine have to say about this matter.

Is God supernatural or supertechnological? I believe God is both—again, this is a personal belief. As for time and space, the universe as we know it (after the Big Bang) is hemmed in by four dimensions, so by definition, we cannot experience anything without these dimensions. God, though, is another matter, and so is death. If you are still confused, I suggest you consult a counselor or a wise teacher.

* * *

Another semi-theological question from Tears [leelayce@tri-isys.com]:

I have browsed through a book you wrote, and I want to congratulate you for living a happy life and sharing it with people. I know there are only a few who really enjoy life like you do. I really admire you for all the achievements in your life. My question is: Would you say that God gave you all this happiness?

Thank you for your enthusiastic support. Yes, I owe God much—the gift of life, of family, of friends, of success. But I have also experienced a lot of pain and heartache—physical and emotional—and through the help of the ones I love, I was able to overcome obstacles and move on. I believe that ultimately, we are the ones who are responsible for our own happiness. I am sure you know of people who are blessed with several things and yet are perennially unhappy, and others who are less well-off, but are quite joyful. I happen to be wise enough to be content with what I have, and to want to share with others.

* * *

Let us now go to more mundane matters. Here is request from R. A. Guerrero, Jose Panganiban National High School, Camarines Norte:

I am a third year high school student who belongs to a Science- and Math-oriented class. I read newspapers from time and time, and my favorite articles are about recent scientific and technological discoveries. I read one of your articles who said that pure water boils at 75° C. I conducted several researches to prove this, but I could not find anything, which says that pure water boils at this temperature. I would like to ask you to send me ample reading materials about the abovementioned problem. I do hope that my excessive desire to know more about that fact will be magnanimously considered.

Congratulations for being in an advanced science class, and I commend you for your interest in math and science. If only most of today's youth would have your enthusiasm and perspicacity. Now for the boiling point of water—I never said pure water boiled at 75°C. All I ever said was that water does not always boil at 100°C. Water boils at a certain temperature depending on the prevailing atmospheric pressure. At high altitudes, there is less air, and low atmospheric pressure, thus a lower boiling point. The other side of the coin also holds—for example, in the pressure cooker, the pressure is high, thus there is a higher boiling point for water, and thus, a faster cooking time.

If you need more material on this (and if you want to conduct an experiment), then get hold of my book "Straight Talk on Everyday Mysteries," available at National Bookstore.

* * *

Send your queries to me at blessbook@yahoo.com.

Hair transplant for balding Filipinos

MORE than 800 balding Filipinos are now with a new crown of growing hair.

According to the A. Pineda Hair Clinics, as of last February more than 800 Filipinos with hair growth problems have benefited from hair transplant procedures by veteran hair restoration expert Dr. Andrew Pineda, the country's only Filipino hair transplant surgeon.

The clinic said more than 2,000 hair transplantation procedures have been performed in the Philippines and the United States by the seasoned surgeon.

Hair transplant surgery has become so popular that middle-income men now form the bulk of Pineda's roster of clients. Jeepney drivers, working students and security guards are willing to shell out a considerable sum to have their "natural-looking crowning glory."

Medical research has shown that when the male hormone testosterone is exposed to 5-alpha-reductase, an enzyme in the hair follicle, it produces another hormone called dihydrotestosterone (DHT), which causes permanent hair loss. "Most often, the hair in the balding region will continue to grow at an increasingly slower rate until hair growth ceases completely," Pineda said.

Minor surgery

Hair transplantation is a very minor outpatient surgery because it only deals with the outermost layers of the hair-bearing skin: the epidermis, the dermis that contain the hair follicles (roots) and a small part of the fat layer.

Pineda assured that since risks in hair transplantation are rare, clients "should not worry excessively about risks or complications and that hair transplant discomfort is usually minimal, with pain medication always offered in the first 24 hours after surgery."

Pineda said patients undergo a four- to five-hour operation where he grafts 2,500 old hair strands to some 4,500 new hair strands. No bandages are needed and patients may take a bath eight hours after the transplant.

He said that since regular hair grows at the rate of one centimeter per month, in a span of 30 days, patients can already see stubble and afterward the hair grows steadily.

Hair restoration surgery results are permanent, Pineda added, and hair will retain its genetic characteristics even after relocation and will grow and continue to grow for the rest of the patient's life.

Pineda is a member of the International Society of Hair Restoration Surgeons, was trained in the United States on natural hair restoration, and had an extensive four-year study under notable hair transplant surgeons from New York, Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego and Beverly Hills.

With his surgical team composed of US-trained assistants, Pineda has performed thousands of hair transplant procedures at his clinics in Makati and Davao.

Medical City opens cardiovascular units

WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART technology, doctor-friendly, patient-centered facilities and a social conscience, The Medical City in Ortigas Center has joined the league of major cardiovascular centers in the Philippines in the fight against cardiovascular disease, the country's leading cause of mortality.

Its recently opened Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and Open Heart Surgery Unit not only aim to bring people and technology together, they will also provide opportunities for cardiovascular research and continuing education. The consolidation of staff expertise will be utilized to contribute to a better appreciation of the economics of cardiovascular care that can be utilized in the formulation of public health policies.

The Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory is headed by Dr. Gregorio Martinez, an invasive and interventional cardiologist trained in the United States. The laboratory is equipped with the state-of-the-art Philips Integris CV, a digital CD-ROM-based system that provides excellent image resolution and efficient archiving. With this system, the images can be replicated and transmitted easily with no loss of data or decrease in resolution. An added feature is the 3-dimensional angiography, the first in the country, which allows full visualization of the vascular structures for better management of vascular abnormalities like intracerebral aneurysms.

The Open-Heart Surgery Unit is headed by Dr. Jose Gonzales, a well-respected cardiovascular surgeon in the country. It is equipped to do coronary artery bypass grafting, valve repair, valve replacement, congenital heart surgery and other heart-related surgical procedures.

UP group holds triathlon

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Marine Biological Society in cooperation with David's Salons and USA Sports will be holding the "1st UP MBS Sprint Triathlon" tomorrow at the swimming pool and academic oval in Diliman.

The sprint triathlon will include the following legs: 600-m swim, 15.5-km bike and 4.5-km run.

Race proper will start at 1 p.m., while the briefing will be at 12:30 p.m. Registration is ongoing until the day of the event and registration fee is P250.

This event is sponsored by Gatorade and Bombproof Gear Designs Inc. Proceeds for this event will help fund the environmental project of UP MBS. For inquiries, call 0917-5335 or 0917-978-7086.

The case of the anorexic model

BY RAFAEL CASTILLO, M.D.

MEDICAL FILES

AIMEE was the darling of the family. At 18, she has blossomed to be a likely beauty queen. She has appeared in a television commercial and were it not for her strict parents, she would have accepted an offer to enter the movies. She was also the darling in the campus and her three elder brothers had to make an extra effort to keep the wolves at bay.

Standing 5 feet 6 inches tall, with alluring *morena* features, Aimee has been actively modeling since she was 13 years old. Keeping herself trim and fit became a passion for Aimee. Adding a couple of pounds to her weight would cause her tremendous anxiety and make her shun all food. No food and rigorous exercise. This was her sure-fire formula to maintain that Twiggy-like figure...until one day, when she passed out, cold and clammy, and she had to be rushed to the nearest hospital.

"She's quite dehydrated, and our preliminary tests show that she has electrolyte imbalance," the doctor told Aimee's parents. "Her potassium, one of the electrolytes in the blood, is markedly low which is likely the cause of her arrhythmia or irregular heart beat. The abnormal heartbeat most likely caused her to faint, and it's fortunate that you reached the hospital just in time," added the doctor.

Aimee's parents narrated her history, especially her strict-dieting habits. "It looks like she has anorexia nervosa," the doctor assessed. "It is an eating disorder characterized by an extreme fear of obesity."

Causes

Anorexia nervosa (AN) is caused by one's distorted image or perception of what a healthy body should be. It is more common in women, accounting for 95 percent of affected individuals. They aim to maintain a less-than-normal ideal body weight resorting to an excessively rigid regimen of diet and exercise. It usually starts in adolescence, sometimes earlier, and less in adulthood.

Psychosocial factors, especially with the strong pressure to remain slim to be considered attractive, healthy and desirable, are causative triggers that lead to the development of AN.

What may start as a healthy habit of diet and exercise may become pathological and markedly adverse if overdone. Anorexia nervosa may be mild or transient, or severe and long lasting. Women may stop menstruating and in 10 to 20 percent of cases, serious and fatal complications may occur. Hence, it is imperative to note promptly early signs of AN in a friend or relative before serious complications develop.

Patients with AN are usually meticulous, compulsive and highly success-oriented. They set extremely high standards for themselves. They show extreme caution about diet even if they are already thin. They may look emaciated already, but they still feel overweight. Hence, they usually engage in a strenuous exercise regimen. All of those who have AN may have Bulimia Nervosa. They may binge and then purge themselves by vomiting or taking laxatives and diuretics. These may lead to dehydration and electrolyte imbalance, which may cause serious complications, even sudden death in a few instances.

Women stop menstruating, or may have irregular periods. They may also lose interest in sex. They may present with low-blood pressure, abnormal heart rate and rhythm, low body temperature, and swelling of tissues caused by fluid accumulation or edema, since their body proteins are already low. Depression is a common psychological problem in AN patients although they may look normal or jolly on the outside. They may also frequently lie about what they feel and they usually conceal their vomiting and their peculiar dietary habits.

Patients with AN become eventually malnourished and every major organ system in the body is likely to be affected. The heart, aggravated by the fluid and electrolyte imbalance, gets weaker and pumps less blood to the different parts of the body. The blood may also become acidic, called metabolic acidosis. The end-result can be catastrophic.

After the doctor's explanation, Aimee's parents felt a big sense of guilt for partly contributing to Aimee's AN. Aimee's mom used to be one of the lovely socialites of Philippine society and she has always instilled in Aimee's young mind that to be attractive, one must always remain slim.

"How can we treat Aimee, doc? Please do everything to help her." There was panic in the voice of Aimee's mom.

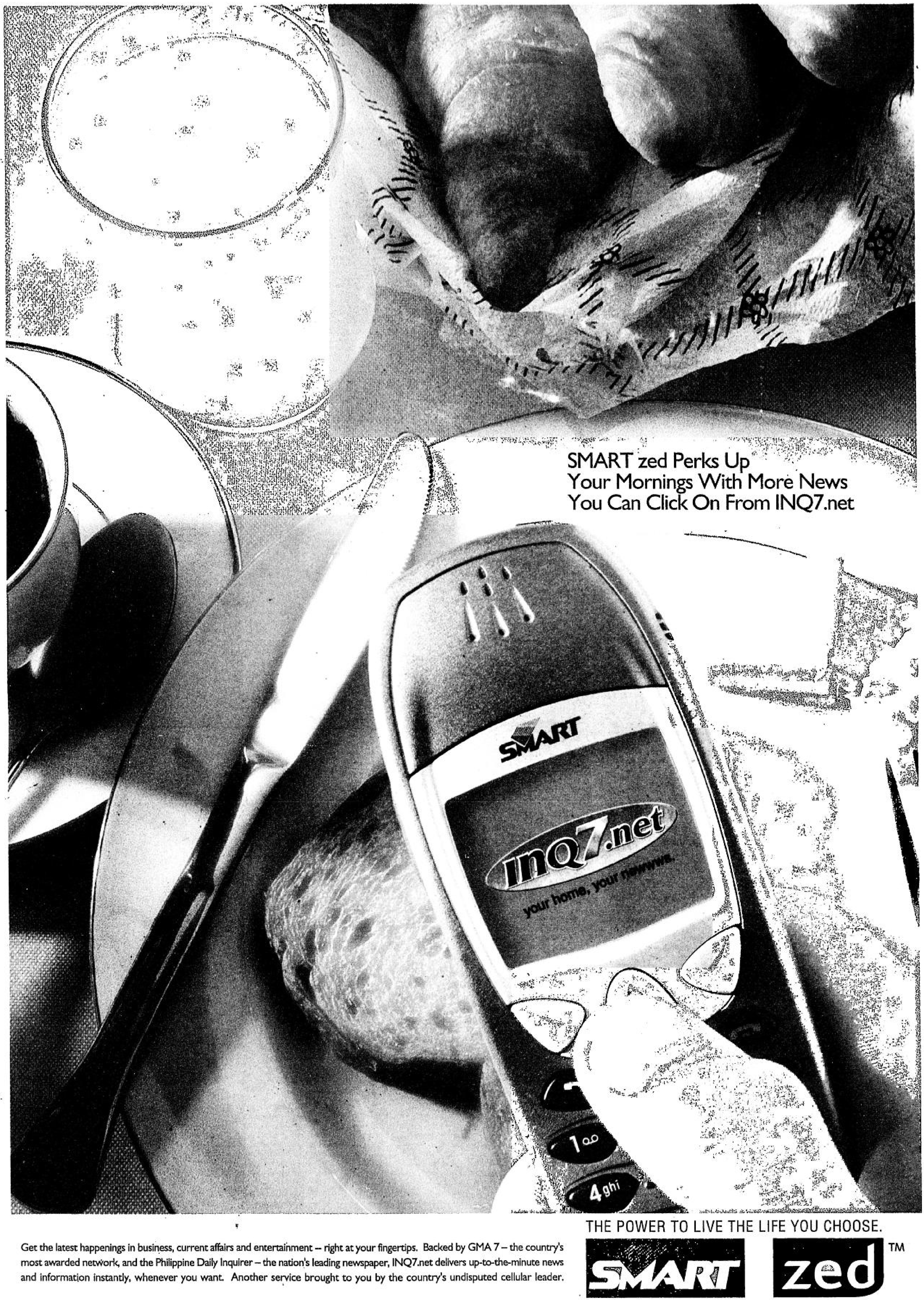
Treatment

"Our treatment will consist of three steps," the doctor explained. "First, we'll have to correct the fluid and electrolyte problems. The second step is to restore her normal body weight. The third and probably most important element of her treatment, is to correct her psychological problems by psychotherapy, supplemented with some drugs. This may involve individual, group or family psychotherapy. The aim of treatment is to establish a calm, concerned, stable environment while encouraging the intake of an adequate amount of food."

It was a difficult uphill climb for Aimee after that near fatal experience. With the support of her family and friends plus her own determination to recover, she finally conquered her life-threatening anorexia nervosa.

That was 20 years ago. Aimee is now a successful entrepreneur, running a fitness center and distributing health-related products. She has a 13-year-old daughter, bright and lovely as her mom. Aimee promised herself that her daughter would never undergo the same sad episode she did.

(Medical Files is based on the case studies of actual patients. In addition to the medical information, it stresses the socio-psychological impact of disease on the patient. Some data have been changed to cover the patient's identity. Mail comments or inquiries to Room 601, Medical Arts Center, Manila Doctors' Hospital, T. M. Kalaw, Ermita Manila; or e-mail rrc@i-manila.com.ph.)



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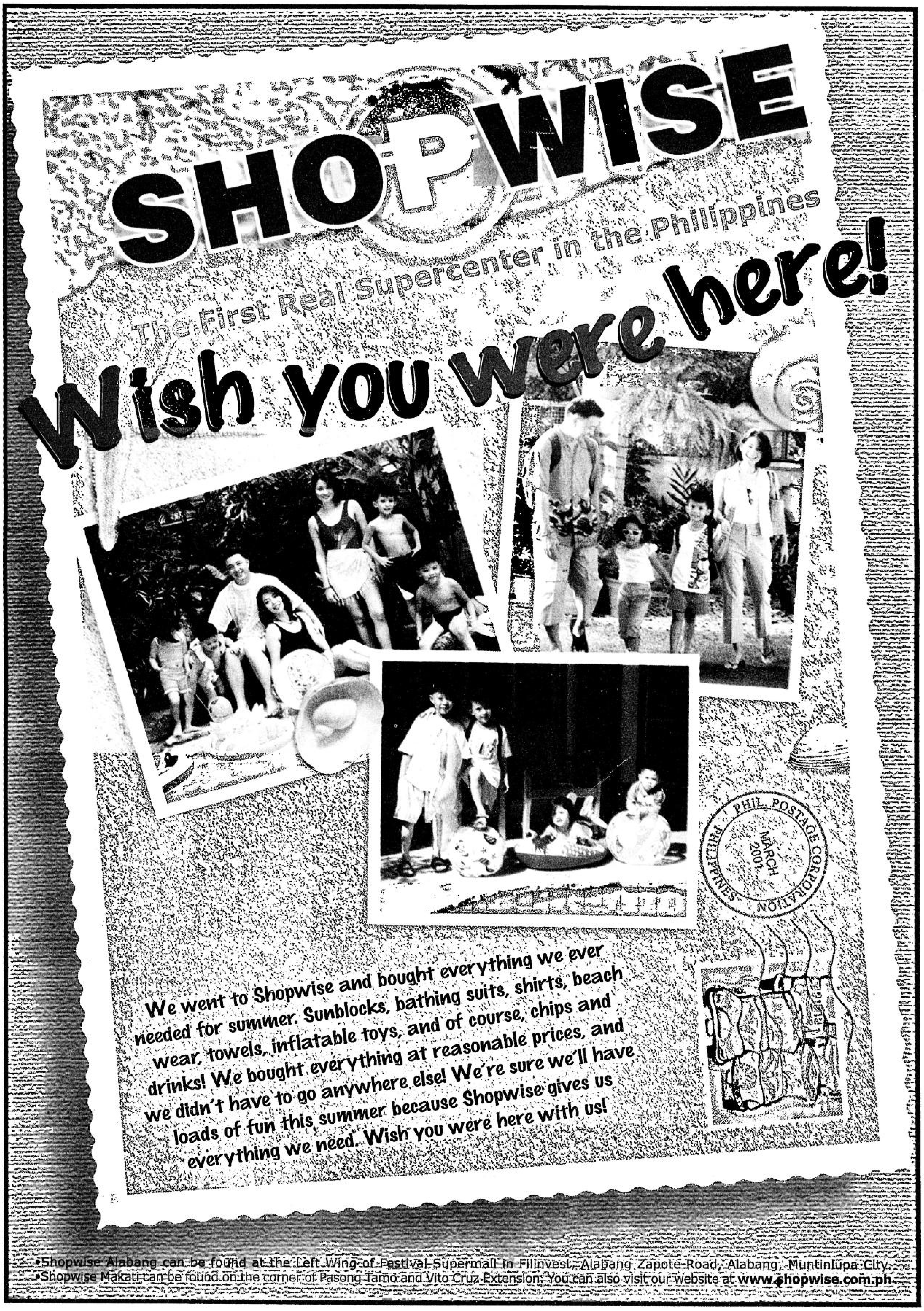
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MARCH
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We went to Shopwise and bought everything we ever needed for summer. Sunblocks, bathing suits, shirts, beach wear, towels, inflatable toys, and of course, chips and drinks! We bought everything at reasonable prices, and we didn't have to go anywhere else! We're sure we'll have loads of fun this summer because Shopwise gives us everything we need. Wish you were here with us!

- Shopwise Alabang can be found at the Left Wing of Festival Supermall in Filinvest, Alabang Zapote Road, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.
- Shopwise Makati can be found on the corner of Pasong Tamo and Vito Cruz Extension. You can also visit our website at **www.shopwise.com.ph**

ROLE MODELS FOR NEW GRADUATES

SENATOR Sergio "Serge" Osmeña III

THE LITTLE boy Serge

BY ROCHE LEONOR

WHO doesn't know **Senator Sergio Osmeña III? Serge,** as he is more popularly called, proved his mettle and won the hearts of the youth, when he voted to open the infamous second, envelope.

Serge first propelled into the limelight when an episode of his life was made into a movie, **"Eskapo."** It is a true story about the late **Geny Lopez** and **Serge Osmeña** that spanned five years, starting from their incarceration during the dictatorial regime, and then, their legendary escape and flight to freedom.

The families of **Serge** and **Geny** belong to influential and politically powerful families. Both fought the **Marcos** dictatorship. They were incarcerated to bring their families to their knees and to acknowledge the legitimacy of the dictator.

Instead, both men begged their fathers, who were in exile, not to give in. In turn, they suffered great emotional and physical distress behind the prison walls of **Fort Bonifacio.**

Serge Osmeña's life has never been the same since that time of great trial and tribulation. He also saw and witnessed how many lives were affected, sacrificed and lost. It was then that he vowed to work for democracy and for the improvement of lives the Filipino people. He has not ceased working since that time.

CARING for the victims of toxic wastes is part of Serge's causes.

Serge decided to run for a senatorial spot in 1995, which he won overwhelmingly. At first, people were unsure that he would do well in the Senate. Many thought he would be just like many politicians—all talk, all form and no substance.

Serge proved them wrong. In his meritorious six-year term as senator, he authored laws concentrating on the agrarian sector. Knowing the big contribution of farmers to the society, he formulated laws uplifting the conditions of the country's farmers. Currently, he holds the chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Agriculture.

Many people, especially the youth, consider the impeachment trial one of Serge's foremost achievements. During the 21-day historic trial, he showed his intelligence by asking the witnesses sensible and relevant questions. He also made history when he voted for the opening of the second envelope, which sparked the People Power II.

A DOTING father to his children

Aside from campaigning for a 2nd term in the Senate under the People Power Coalition, **Serge** is also busy with his pet cause—helping the victims of toxic waste, that have birth defects and are handicapped as a consequence of the nuclear contamination at the American bases. Now, he is asking the public to help him pressure the United States government to clean up their waste and to compensate the victims.

Serge studied business in Georgetown University. He is married to the former **Bettina Lopez** and is a doting father to five children: **Sergio IV, Cristina, Joey, Ben, Danielle** and **Andrea.**

His courage, intelligence and conviction have earned him much respect from people from all walks of life. His proven track record is proof enough that he is a man made of sterner stuff. Coming from a political family, he has continued the legacy of his grandfather, the former **President Sergio Osmeña.**

With a certain second term in the Senate, the public can be assured that **Serge** will do what is best for the country. Truly, he is a shinning role model for the youth of today.

SENATOR for the people

PUSHING for the improvement of farmers' lives.

EFFECTIVELY implementing his organizational skills.

Josie Trinidad Lichauco

JOSIE Lichauco was propelled into the limelight a few months ago, seeking for the resignation of then President Erap. The youth suddenly took notice.

Josie Lichauco was DOTC undersecretary for the longest time. She became DOTC Secretary and was the first Cabinet member to resign from her post in disgust over the old government.

Having been in government service for many years, it could not have been an easy decision for her.

Before becoming a convenor and a member of the Erap Resign Movement, she was also an incorporator and a Board of Trustees member of the **Transparency and Public Accountability Today and Tomorrow,** which is one of the signatories to the impeachment complaint.

In her career, **Josie Lichauco** headed many important government units such as the **Light Rail Transit Authority** and **Philippine Ports Authority.** She was also Council Member of the **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)** for 11 years. ITU is the biggest United Nations agency and governs world telecommunications and information.

JOSIE Lichauco with former British Prime Minister Lady Margaret Thatcher.

JOSIE with Bill Gates

JOSIE with former Prime Minister of Korea, who was a contemporary at Yale.

She has extensive experience in international organizations, a skill which is very much needed these days to bring back the lost glory of the country. She has figured in numerous multilateral and bilateral negotiations with the ITU and WTO and has headed many Philippine panels in communication conferences around the world. She was also part of the World Bank, sitting as chair of the Steering Committee to oversee the implementation of WB's Technical Assistance Studies in Communication.

Josie Lichauco has always been a model for all kinds of people. Women lawyers hail her "for penetrating man's private preserve—the world of telecommunication—without doing violence to man's ego and for exercising a woman's high sense of discretion and propriety."

Young professionals look up to her when the **Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federation (PETEF)** recognized her "playing a significant role in the formulation of key government policies for telecommunications."

Likewise, the **Gintong Ina Foundation** awarded her for her dedication and devotion for serving the public.

Solita Monsod, in her Philippine Daily Inquirer column, said that "her qualifications and performance would pass the closest scrutiny. To include her in the present government would enhance administration's image as one where professionalism is paramount."

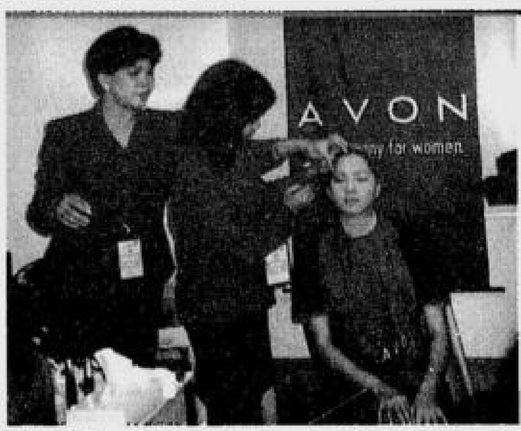
Not many know it but **Josie Lichauco** is a competent lawyer. She obtained her Masters of Laws degree from **Yale University,** specializing in International Law on Contracts and Corporate Law. She is also a UP College of Law graduate, where she finished 6th place in a class of 156 students.

Through it all, **Josie Lichauco** maintains that her heart will always be with government service, contributing her very best to the society and to the world. She is a woman who has achieved a lot, and is definitely, a great person to look up to, and to emulate.

PHILIPPINES
AT the WorldTelecommunication Development Conference in Buenos Aires.

JOSIE as guest of honor, at the global inauguration of Multi-media convergent telephony in Geneva.

AVON AT AIR PHILIPPINES


EVELYN and Neri demonstrate eye make-up.

LEARNING make-up is always a lot of fun.

THEY are fondly called **Evelyn** and **Nery**. These are the two most popular **Avon** ladies, simply because they care enough to make time and do the airline training circuit. Only recently they helped 20 young ladies, who are being trained in the Personality Development Class at **Air Philippines,** to bring out the very best in their facial features. Make-up is a form of art and all the cabin attendants, who were in training, were delighted at the transformation that took place after the class. Demonstrating everything from skin care, to eyebrow plucking, choosing the right foundation, and the proper application of make-up, **Evelyn** and **Nery** have helped countless women put their best face forward. After all, we do have to give nature a helping hand and a little help from **Avon** is very much appreciated.

A LOVELY face comes alive with Avon.

APPLYING the right color of foundation makes all the difference.

PRETTY cabin attendants all in a row.

Get The Most Out Of Your Trip

SEASONED travelers agree the best way to experience another country is not to confine oneself to tourist spots.

"I find that places not listed in the tourist handbook become the more memorable ones," maintained well-traveled Maricar Pastrana, an executive who has toured Asia, Europe and US.

Preview magazine's fashion editor Pauline Sauco, former executive producer of travel show Cheche Lazaro Presents, agrees. "Joining a tour limits the places you can visit and the time you can spend in each location," said Pauline.

But while Maricar and Pauline relish adventure, they are practical when it comes to spending. Said Maricar, "I try to bring enough money to cover my expenses and, of course, for emergencies, there is always my Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa. No matter how you plan your budget, there are always expenses you forgot to consider. In these times, it's very comforting to know that I have my trusty Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa," shared Maricar.

She also appreciates the travel rewards afforded her by her credit card. With Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa, Maricar's spending earns her Asia Miles, which she can use to redeem flights. Her recent trip to Australia was free, thanks to Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa.

In Pauline's case, access to over 200,000 cash advance ATMs makes her Citibank credit card truly indispensable. "One time, we were caught in the middle of airline strike and were stranded in Tel Aviv for five days. Needless to say, our cash had run out and my credit card saved the day," Pauline narrated.

Turn Everyday Spending Into Your Dream Holiday

WITH Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa, your everyday purchases can be your ticket to your dream holiday.

You can earn Asia Miles simply by charging these expenses to your Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa. Asia Miles is Cathay Pacific's frequent flyer program, where all Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa card members can enroll. For every P45 spent locally, cardholders earn one Asia Mile, and for overseas spending, they get two Asia Miles for every P45 spent. The region's leading travel reward program, Asia Miles offers over 850 destinations via 13 airline partners.

Apart from Cathay Pacific Airways, Asia Miles' free flights can be redeemed on Aer Lingus, American Airlines, British Airways, Sabena, Swissair and more. Asia Miles can also be used for upgrades and tickets for travel companions.

Unlike traditional frequent flyer programs where members only earn free flights from flying, all expenses on Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa can be converted into Asia Miles.

And with its ongoing promotion dubbed "Two million Asia Miles Lucky Draw," Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa is giving new card members the chance to go on overseas adventures for free.

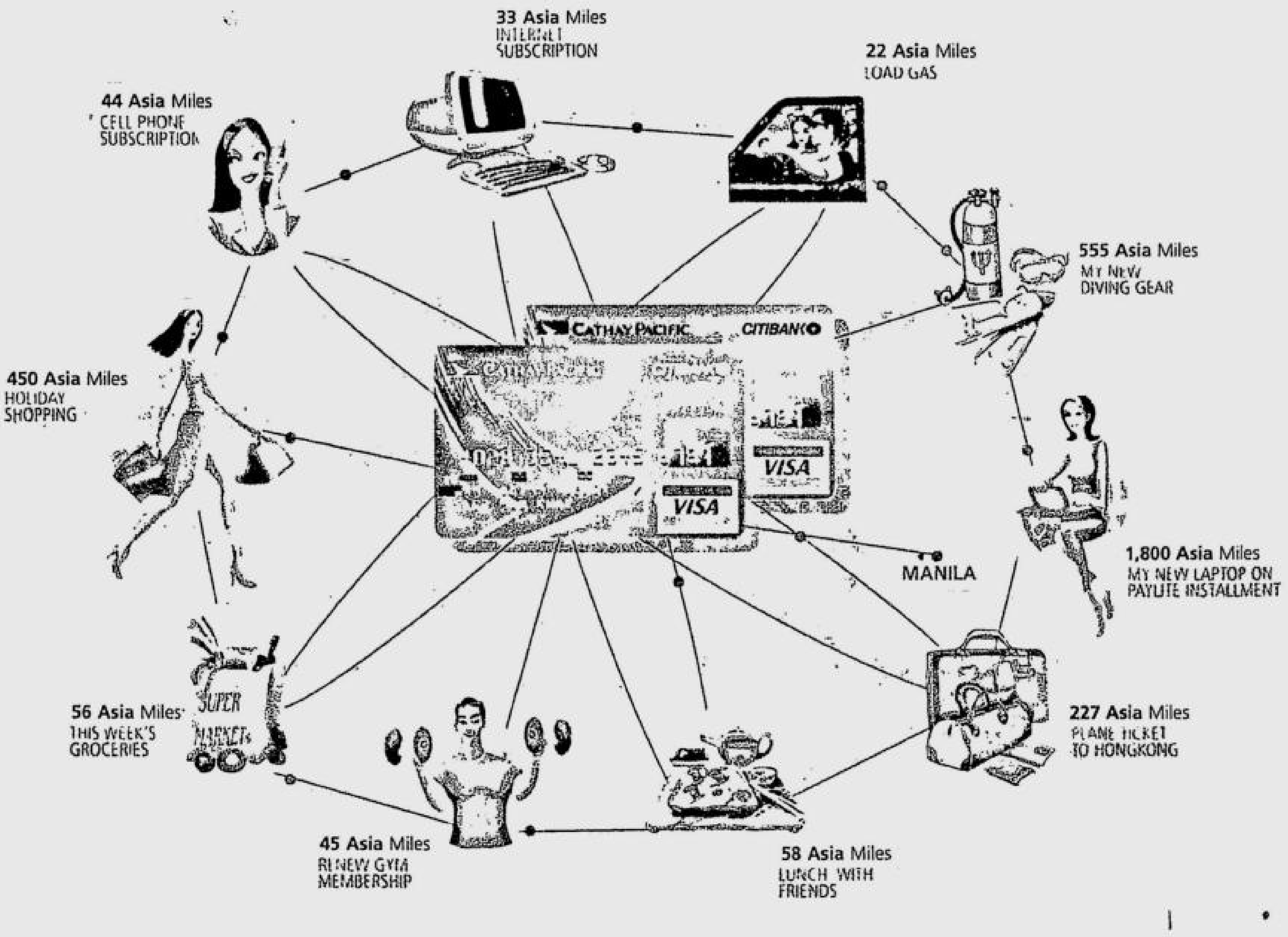
All approved applicants from December 01 to March 31, 2001 automatically qualify for the raffle. Citibank, the country's largest single bank issuer of credit cards, is raffling off 500,000 Asia Miles monthly. Five winners of 100,000 Asia Miles each will be drawn every month beginning December until March. Every 100,000 Asia Miles winner can choose to spend these on a Hong Kong trip (25,000) Asia Miles or a Sydney tour (45,000) Asia Miles or visits to Europe or the US (60,000) miles.

"This is the best time to apply for a Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa," enthused Pascual. "For details, call our 24-hour Citiphone at 995-9999 or 234-9999 for Metro Cebu, or log-on to the Citi at *www.citibank.com.ph*

MARICAR Pastrana (left) enjoying her free trip to Australia, courtesy of her Citibank Cathay Pacific Visa, at the famed Sydney Opera House with friends Siobhon Escario and Lasse Holopainen.

A member of citigroup

It's not just a Credit Card



It's turning everyday purchases into a faster route to FREE travel!

Saving up for a dream holiday makes every peso count!!! A Citibank Cathay Pacific VISA helps you get there faster.

You don't have to be a frequent flyer to earn miles. Now, you can earn Asia Miles™ on the ground. Let your everyday purchases like groceries, gas, utility bills earn more Asia Miles for you! You earn **1 Asia Mile for every P45 you spend locally** and **2 Asia Miles for every P45 spent abroad.** You can redeem these Asia Miles for FREE flights, upgrades and companion tickets to over 850 destinations on a choice of 12 leading airlines. Imagine, your dream holiday could be just a grocery bill away.

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A Whale of Fun

ACE comedian Dolphy with John Corcoran and Tim Desmond

BY ALEXANDER JONAH DOMINGUEZ

MY middle name is **Jonah** and whales have always held a strange fascination for me. I heard that they had come to **Subic Bay**, so I trekked there on a weekend, and ended up with an experience that I will remember for a lifetime.

I encountered not one, but several whales.

They are called "false" killer whales. They are not black and white, like **Keiko** of **the Free Willy** fame, who is the real Orca Killer whale. They are totally black, friendly and very large.

I touched their skins. They felt very smooth, almost like the inner tubing of a tire. I looked at them straight in the eyes and they looked back. We were just two species in the same Universe interacting and playing with one another. The whale called Cookie opened his mouth, and his large razor-like teeth scared me a little. All he really wanted was for me to stroke his tongue. A little apprehensive, I felt the soft, thick muscle. He relished the touch and I relished the moment.

Later we were told that these whales consume up to 15 kilos of fish a day. They fish are so fresh that they are fit for human consumption, some flown in from the US and some caught along the bay. They are trained by obeying commands that emanate from a whistle, which are not unlike the sounds that they emit themselves. They are rewarded with fish and squid for their tricks. They spin, they lay on their bellies, and they allow you to stroke them. The most spectacular moment was having this enormous creature stand in front of me, on his tail, with his fins outstretched. I touched him and we were locked, for a moment, in what felt like an embrace. I actually hugged a whale. WOW!

I know there have been a lot of controversy over the training and capture of these magnificent creatures of the sea. No one **will debate** that the **whales should be free to swim the oceans. On the other hand, these creatures can also be used to teach valuable lessons to the youth.** I learned **a lot that day. I learned that there is nothing to fear about whales.** I learned **about the different species, a team of young eager marine biologists** told us **of their life cycle, eating habits and behavior.**

There is much that that the **whales can teach us. Although in captivity, these creatures did not look** stressed—they are actually playful and seemed like they were having fun. Fed three times a day, they have additional snacks from the rewards handed to them by their trainers.

Like all creatures of the universe, they work for their meals, but they are cared for, given attention, with a lot of room to swim and frolic in the beautiful enclosure that is called the **Miracle Beach of Cubi Point** in Subic Bay. The sea flows steadily giving natural filtration to the water, so it remains pristine and unpolluted. Nestled between the mountain ranges around and the forest reserve behind, the entire layout of the **Ocean Adventure Park** in Subic is worth the trip.

I am grateful that such a facility now exists for the ordinary Filipino that cannot travel to Sea World and the other great oceanariums of the world. I am happy that finally, in a country of 7,100 islands there is a group that is willing to come in, invest money and make world class facilities for children and adults alike, to learn, enjoy and interact.

It was a pleasure to meet the two moving figures behind this project, **Tim Desmond** and **John Corcoran**. Two avowed animal lovers who have a genuine love for the sea and all its creatures. **Tom Desmond** is **Keiko's** trainer for the movie **Free Willy**. They also shared how this park will give employment to the people of Olongapo, Bataan and the other neighboring provinces. They relate that now among fishermen that once blasted for fishing, and looked at the sea as just a means of livelihood there was now an "ownership" and pride in their environment and their surroundings. As I looked around me, and saw the faces of the people that were around the Ocean Adventure Park, indeed there was pride and a look of hope for the project and the future.

We were told that very soon there would be a complete aquarium featuring the sea creatures that abound around the Subic Bay area. You already can see small aquariums as a prelude to the bigger ones that are being constructed. Soon sea lions, walruses and dolphins will be coming to Ocean Park. Beyond a doubt that will be another memorable adventure.

It is best to make arrangements with the Manila booking office for appointments if you intend to swim with the whales. So as not to stress them encounters are not frequent and only a few people are allowed at any given time. Just call 892-5231 or 892-5219 and ask for Carmela or Adette to make reservations.

In the end,
we conserve only
what we love; we
love only what
we understand;
and we
understand only
what we have
been taught"

-Baba Dioum

A COMPOSITE of pictures demostrating the whole encounter at the Ocean Adventure Park in Subic

Davao Salutes Its Most Outstanding High School Students

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
FE R. DACUDAO

THE MONTH of March yields the fine achievements of graduates everywhere in the country.

In Davao City, the Davao Jaycees culminated their annual search for the Most Outstanding High School Graduate (MOHSG) and Youth Leadership Excellence Award (YLEA). Top students from 19 high schools, public and private, including those from distant areas such as Bunawan, Mintal, Toril and Sasa, participated in the prestigious competition. Personable, articulate, responsible and intelligent, these young men and women thoroughly impressed the judges during the evaluation.

DAVAO'S Most Outstanding High School gradautes with John Oropeza, Davao Jaycees Project chair (extreme left), awardess (from left), Roxanne Roxas, Shenna Maranguit, Bel Emmans Padlan, Radha Mansukhani and Ma. Olivia Mendez. In the back row are all the other nominees.

Emerging as the Most Outstanding High School Graduate was Bel Emmans Padlan, from Davao Christian High School. Padlan also reaped the Youth Leadership Award and the Rural Bank of Koronadal Best in Scrapbook Award. He was included in the roster of citations given by the National Youth Commission, through Commissioner Jimmy Yaokasin, Philippine Jaycees National President. Padlan also won 10 volumes of Time-Life Discovery Encyclopedia from Time-Life Books, a co-presentor of the MOHSG 2001 award.

The other awardees were Radha Mansukhani from Ateneo de Davao University (1st runner-up), Shenna Maranguit from the University of Immaculate Conception (2nd runner-up), Ma. Olivia Mendez from the Davao City National High School (3rd runner-up), and Roxanne Rosario from the Philippine Women's College of Davao(4th runner-up). All the other bets exhibited exemplary academic excellence and leadership qualities.

BEL Emmans Padlan of Davao Christian High School—Davao's Most Outstanding HS graduate

MA. Olivia Mendez of the Davao City National High School

RADHA Mansukhani of Ateneo de Davao University

ROXANNE Rosario of the Philippine Women's College of Davao

SHENNA Maranguit of the University of Immaculate Conception

Asked what the award meant to him, Padlan, who will take up electronic communications engineering, replied that the distinction is a source of inspiration to excel all the more. Mansukhani, who loves to relate to people, will pursue a medical course to be more equipped for service to others.

Project chair John S. Oropeza, a banker and a dynamic leader himself, was pleased with the outcome of their civic organization's annual search. According to him, it is the aim of Jaycees to promote youth leadership excellence through recognizing the outstanding graduates.

With this school year's crop of bright and promising model students, there is a genuine reason to celebrate achievement. Davao, their proud city, hails them!

The Café By The Garden

HAVING fun at the café.

ACTOR Rudy Fernandez with the café staff and the Littons

BY EDNA REYNOSO-ANTON

CHASING after that all-important sheepskin at the end of a long, sometimes insurmountable goal, a student looks forward to a well-deserved respite, after hurdling the last exams for the year. And what better place to spend one's summer vacation than in Baguio's sun-kissed mountains?

Remember how you used to pass the time at Wright Park, aping the cowboys and their equestrian skills? Watching you from their car, you saw your parents choke from the dust churned by the mounted "cavalry" and agonize while you recklessly raced around the circle at full speed against all challengers. Refusing to give up your horse to a long line of impatient and eager riders meant a diet of *chichacorn*, peanuts or soft drinks taken astride your horse under the shade of a pine tree.

Take heed! You and your parents can now enjoy the comforts of home from the lovely Litton gardens across Wright Park. While watching the action from a lofty perch at the Café by the Garden, you can now relish a leisurely and hearty meal.

A young couple, Cristie Topacio and Gabby Litton, opened the Café not too long ago when they decided to start a new chapter in their lives—a plan fully supported by Gabby's dad, lawyer James Litton, when he allowed them to use the garden and convert the driveway into a huge parking lot for customers.

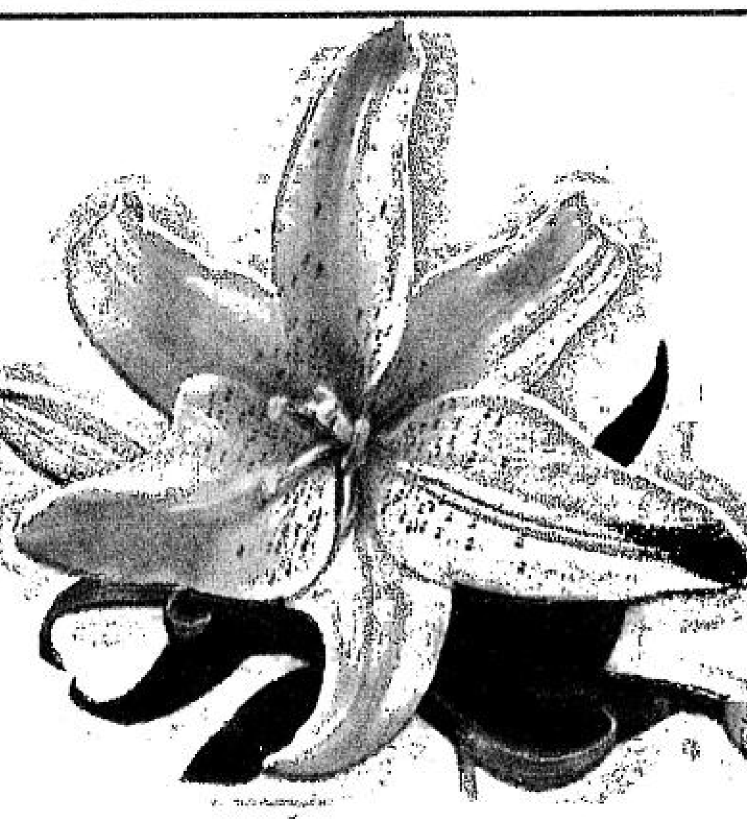
Nestled beneath the canopy of the city's few remaining ancient pine trees, the small Café is an architectural showcase that is distinctively Baguio and designed by none other than well-known architect-interior designer Ched Berenger-Topacio for her daughter and son-in-law in the garden of the Litton's vacation home. Ched's friend, architect Reynaldo Dacones, built the structure while Ched did the landscaping without sacrificing a single pine tree.

Café by the Garden
Gift Shop

CRISTIE Litton watching her son James delivered by a cowboy at the doorstep of the Café by the Garden.

How can a menu go wrong when it was prepared by two of the country's top gourmets, Ched's cousins, Pilar Gonzales (mother of culinary book author Chef Gene Gonzales of Café Ysabel fame) and Martha Horrigan, who originated Italian Village and Tia Maria? When Cristie's aunts saw the great possibilities of a small restaurant in the perfect location, they lost no time in encouraging her and Gabby to start the new venture. With the combined expertise of the two sisters, the café serves a fusion of Italian, California and Asian cuisine at very reasonable prices.

After you've placed your order at the Café, you may want to visit the small gift shop located in a portion of the huge Litton house featuring gilded "Cristie' boxes and other accessories and artwork from the Ched Berenger-Topacio Gallery in Magallanes Village.



Corsages

EVER wonder why so much fuss is made about the prom corsage? Simply because it is a tradition that has persisted through time. Imagine a bride without her bouquet. Well, no prom date should be without her corsage. In every high school album, in every nook and cranny of this world, you will find, pressed between the pages, the dried remains of what was once a the corsage worn on prom night.

It is such a cliché, this corsage. Why not be different and not send one? Don't you dare, if you don't want a truly disappointed date or to be labeled "cheap." However, you can be innovative and veer form the usual cattleyas, vandas and cimbidium orchids. Instead, ask you florist to look into fashioning a different corsage using flowers that do not cost too much and would really complement the gown that your date has chosen for the night. Be sure you have consulted her as to the colors of her evening dress and plan your flowers along the same color scheme. She will appreciate the effort, cherish the photos, and even if the colors of the blooms will not last, at the least the memories will be long remembered. Pressed between the pages of a book or in the album, your corsage will last as long as there are proms, young hearts and romantic evenings. In other words, forever!.

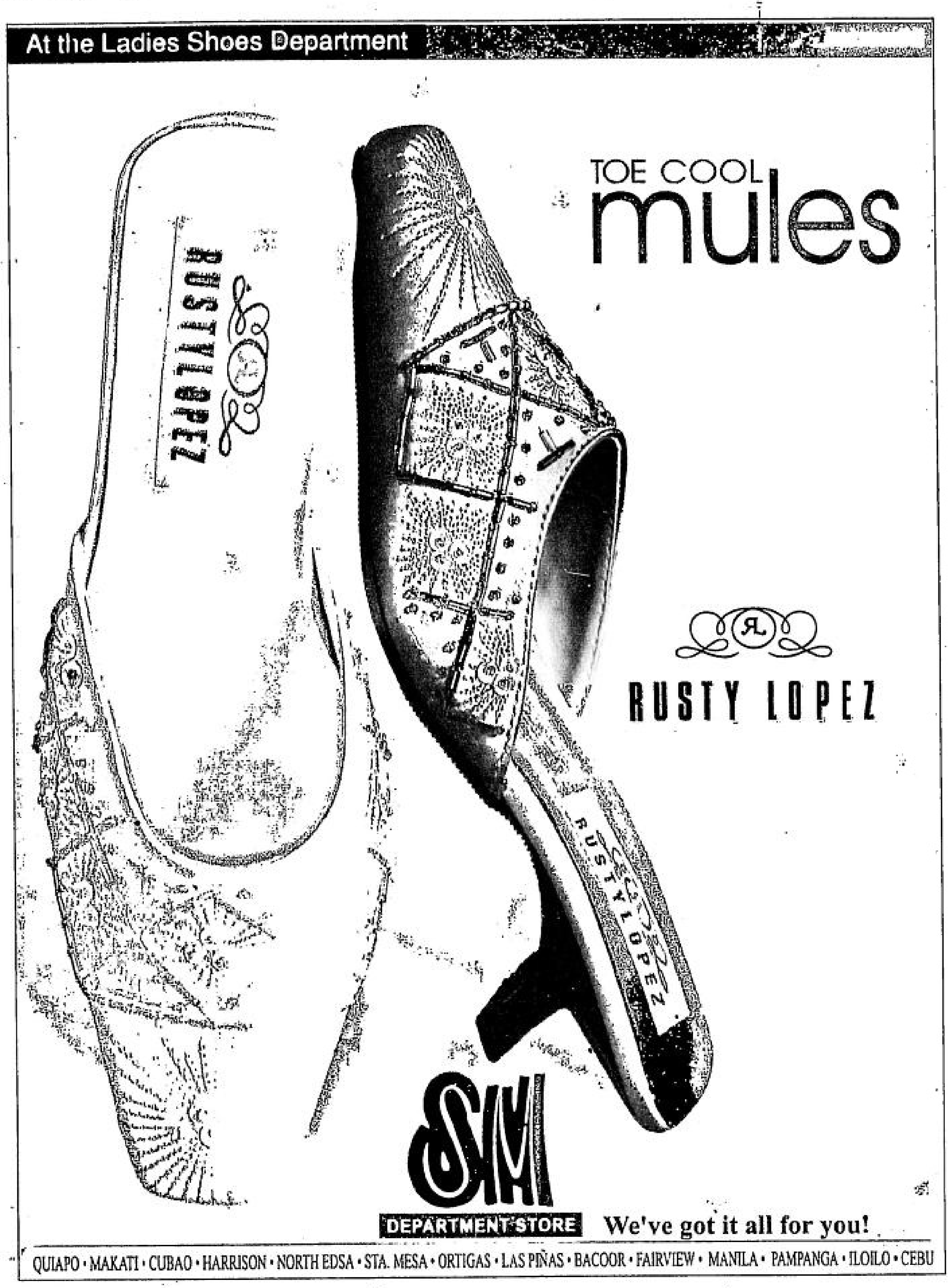
DAINTY white flowers make beautiful and memorable corsages.

VICTORIAN style blue delphiniums, pink roses and carnations, and yellow freesias.

A BEAUTIFUL play of the orange in the gerbera, yellow in the rose and touches of lavender in the pansies.

DEEP red roses with white aster, stand out against a black gown.

PASTEL tints with a touch of lavender irises.



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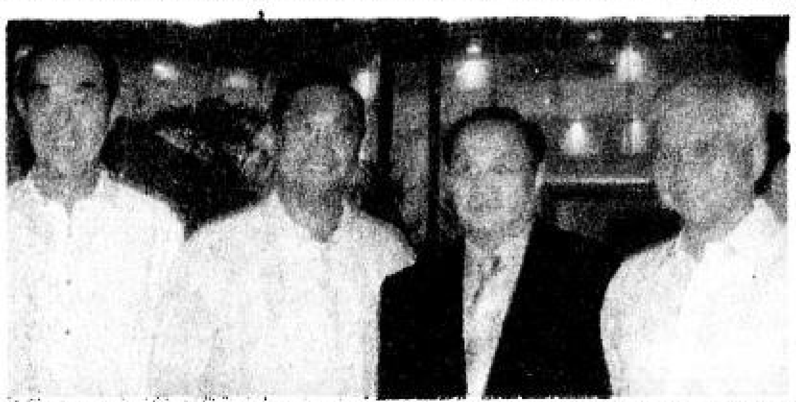
3. Raffle draw will be on May 11, 2001 at the Head Office of Roasters Philippines, Inc.
4. A guest can only win once. In case a name is drawn more than once, the prize with the higher value is given. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
5. Winners will be notified via phone & registered mail. Raffle prizes must be claimed within sixty (60) days from receipt of notification. Winners can claim their prize at the Head Office of RoastersPhils., Inc., 6/F Singapore Airlines Bldg., H.V. Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or at the Kenny Rogers Roasters store closest to the address given by winner in the raffle coupon.
6. Employees of Roasters Philippines, Inc. and its affiliate companies, PR agency and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 0602, SERIES OF 2001

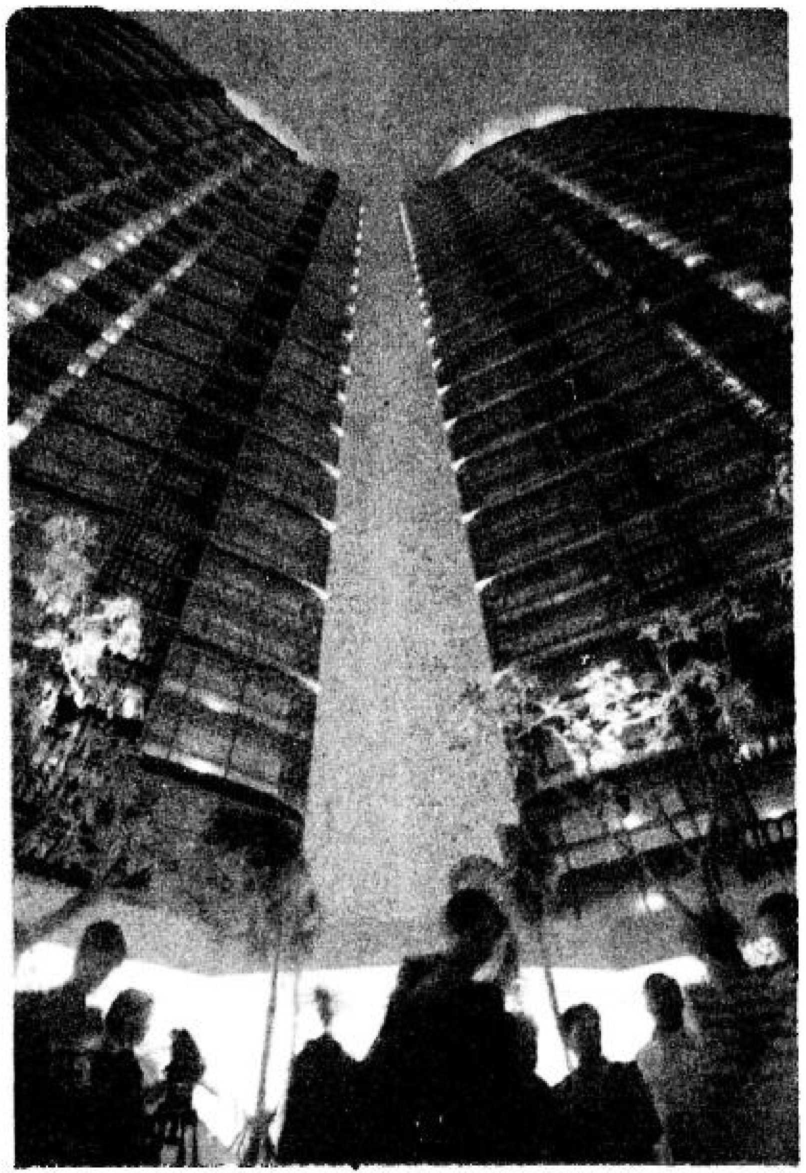
Roasters There's Goodness Here
Coca-Cola enjoy
Nestlé Ice Cream
dos palmas

PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO


THE MEN behind the project. BCDA chair Rogelio Singson, FBDC's Ric Pascua, Metro Pacific chair Manny Pangilinan and PPTI president Albert del Rosario.

CHARLIE and Chinit Rufino with Conrad Onglao

THE UYTENGSUS: Wilfred, Freddie and Kerri


THE MAGNIFICENT Pacific Plaza Towers at Fort Bonifacio

An Evening of Elegance

IF one were to judge the Pacific Plaza Towers by its inauguration in March 9, residents can expect a truly elegant lifestyle as they move in to their new home at Bonifacio Global City.

Guests were treated to a lovely evening from the moment they arrived at the grand drop-off point of each tower. Then, as they entered the stylish, modern interiors of the lobby accentuated by distinctive art pieces, they were led to the most beautiful garden setting.

While enjoying drinks and sumptuous finger foods of Le Souffle's Jesse Sincioco, guests could not help but compliment their surroundings, which included the sounds of trickling water from the nearby waterfall with its subdued lighting. Palm trees against the clear sky stood in the placid 50-meter pool, planking the stage, which was the platform for a bay grand piano and talented musicians like John Lesaca, Jay Cayuca, with his band, and Joe Nicolas, with his orchestra, who serenaded the guests with romantic love songs under the canopy of a full moon.

The 54-storeys of both towers were all lit up for the evening, looking as glamorous as any of the glittering guests, who mingled by the pool side.

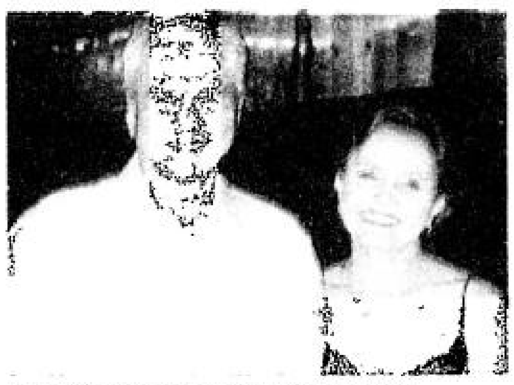
FROM left are Haresh Hiranand, Bob Garcia, residents Mr. and Mrs. Turhan Mangun

SIS. Bernadette Casas r.a, her brother PPTI Architect Meloy Casas, Sis. Luz Emmanuel r.a. and Ria Sta. Maria

OLIVIA and Maritina Romulo

WILLIE Coscolluela and Victor Yue

STANDING from left are Sylvia Heras-Lopez, Jessie Sincioco, Marlon Coscolluela and Jovy Yupangco. Seated are Elvira Rodriguez and Cecille Ongsiako.


ALBERT and Gretchen del Rosario

ROY Navarro

CENTRAL Bank Governor Paeng Buenaventura

ANNIE and Ting Ayllon

FROM left are Angela Panlilio, Carla and Al Tengco

FROM left are Kim Ramos, Arch. Jorge Ramos, Mr. and Mrs. Lor Calma and Oscar Salvacion

FORMER president Cory Aquino, Albert del Rosario and Washington Sycip. Behind are Rogelio Singson and Roy Navarro.

Pitoy's Birthday

EVERY time Pitoy Moreno turns a year "younger," Manila's most elegant ladies get together and plan a gathering to let him know how much he is appreciated.

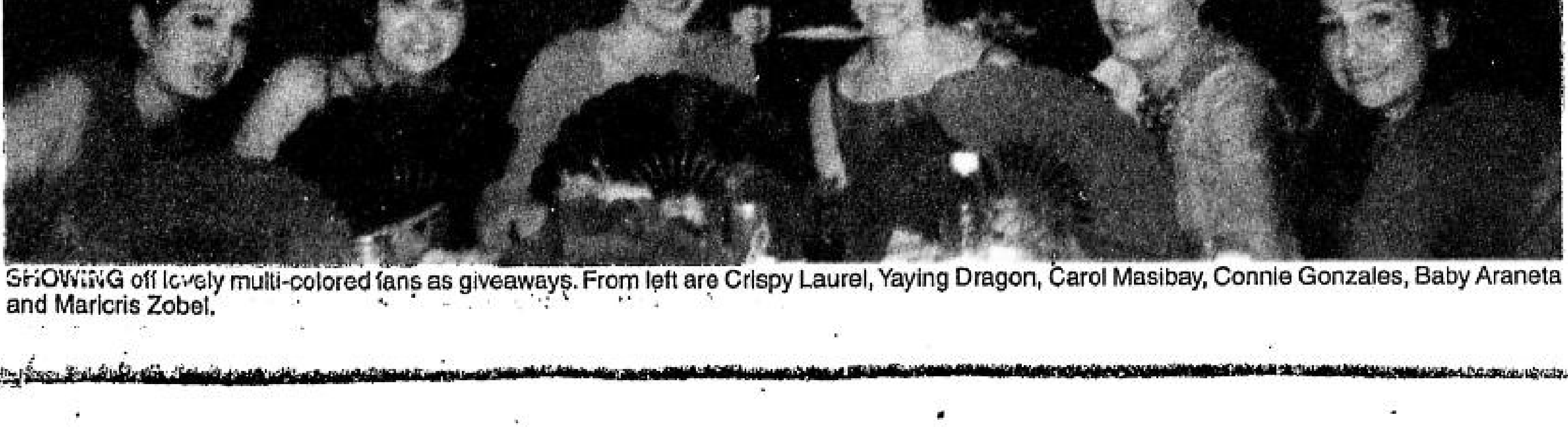
This year the Shiang Palace at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati was full of Pitoy's closest friends that could not pass up the chance to greet him all the best and show him how much he is genuinely liked.

He is a dear friend to all. He gives of that most precious commodity to everyone—time. Time to listen, to have a meal and to chat, time to laugh, and to cry together. He never forgets birthdays and anniversaries, and if you are fortunate, you receive his delicious Buco salad that has become his trademark gift to people he likes and cherishes.

This is why whenever he goes on trips or shopping outings, he never misses a trip to the crystal and glass departments of each store. Not only is his buco salad delectable and cooling, he gifts you with the most beautiful glass containers that are quite exquisite. To Pitoy, may you have many more birthdays and may your blessings continue a hundredfold!

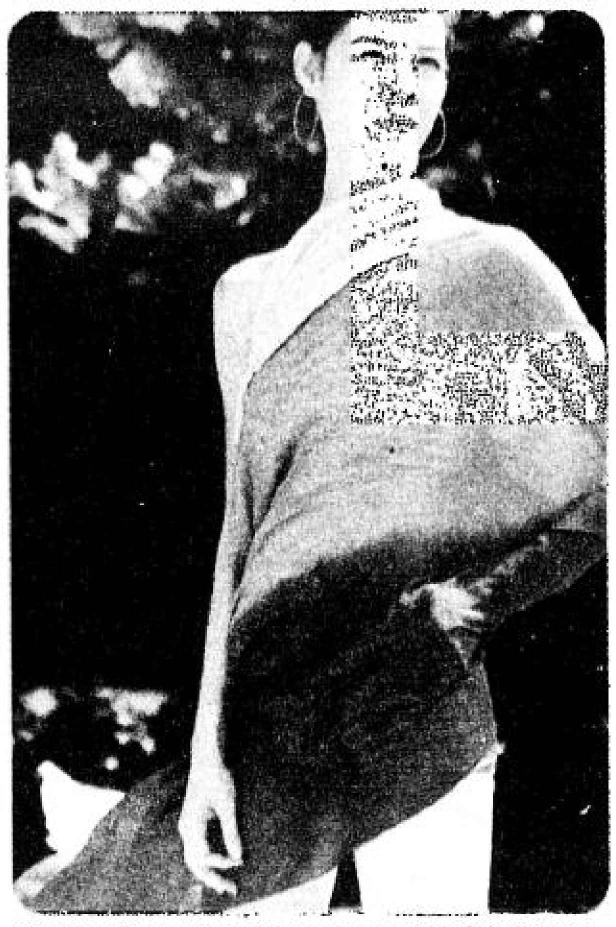
FROM left are Margarita Tambunting, Nelly Gonzales and Vicky Zubiri.

PITOY and his well wishers. Seated from left, Imelda Cojuangco, Pitoy Moreno and Madeleine Lim. Standing from left are Bea Zobel, Ditas Jalbuena, Mercy Tuason, Vicky Delgado, Nelly Gonzalez and Nene Quimson.


SHOWING off lovely multi-colored fans as giveaways. From left are Crispy Laurel, Yaying Dragon, Carol Masibay, Connie Gonzales, Baby Araneta and Maricris Zobel.

FROM left are Alice Sotto, Mercy Tuason, Chavit Singson, Bishop Escaler and Pitoy.

SARONG in stripes with multiple colors of pink, blue and violet from Resort Shop, P598.



SHOW off wearing a three-colored Indian sarong from Resort Shop, P598.

YOU have a choice! Either printed or solid, Naf Naf Paris will make your summer extra chic and fashionable, P698.

SEXY powder blue two-piece swimsuit with beaded strings only from Naf Naf Paris, P698.

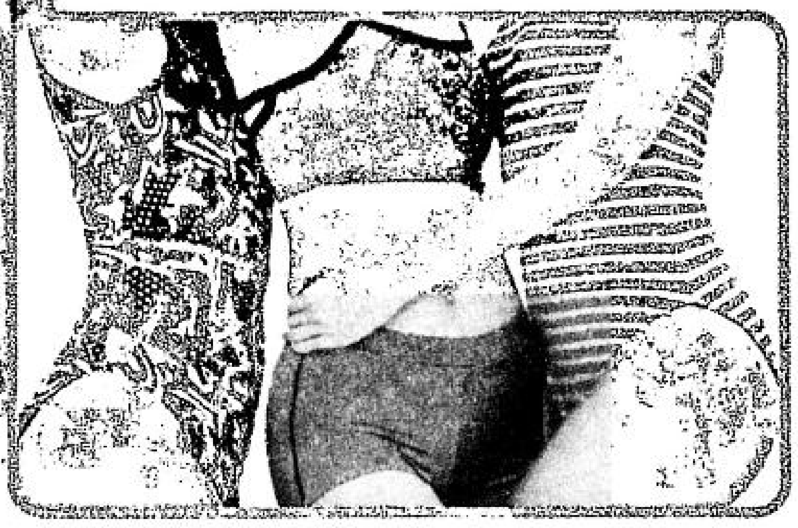
Head for the C

cinderella

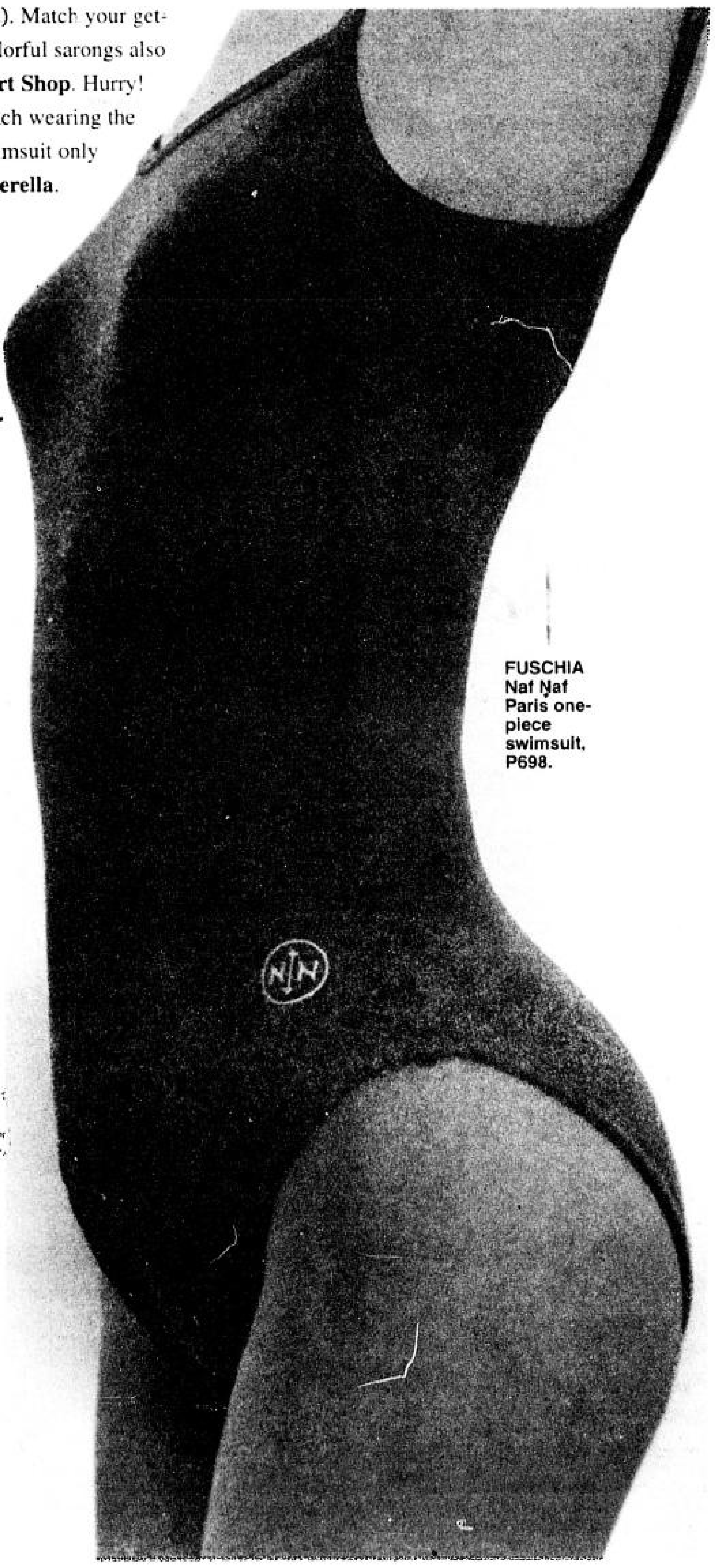
SUMMER is here and everybody is heading for the "C." Yup, heading for **Cinderella**, your only total summer shop. Check out flashy and stylish swimsuits from **Naf Naf Paris**, **Resort Shop** and **SYC (Seventeeen Young Co.)**. Match your get-up with colorful sarongs also from **Resort Shop**. Hurry! Hit the beach wearing the perfect swimsuit only from **Cinderella**.

BE classic yet flash with red floral Naf Naf Paris two-piece swimwear, P698.

PRINTED tank and bikini only from Naf Naf Paris, P698.

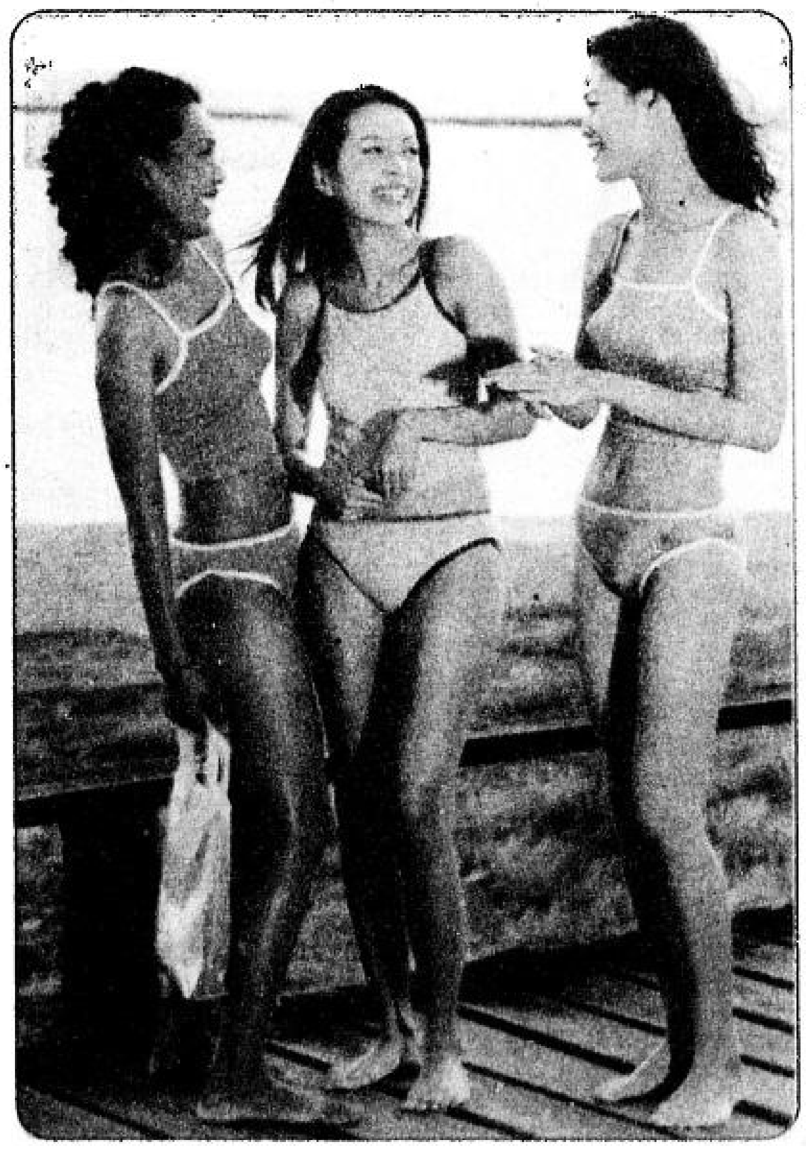


SYC (Seventeen Young Co.) is celebrating summer with various prints and designs for teenagers. Choose your bet from star prints, plains and stripes all from SYC



FUSCHIA Naf Naf Paris one-piece swimsuit, P698.

MONOCHROMATIC Indian sarongs from Resort Shop, P598.



PLAIN yet so nice! Colorful tanks and bikinis from Naf Naf Paris, P698.

A CHALLENGE TO NEW GRADUATES

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

RESIDENTS of Urdaneta Apartments are recycling! From left are Regina Dy, Anne Preysler, Tessie Campillo, Olivia Romulo and Marilou Senn

BY ROCHE LEONOR

MORE than ever, the country's future lies in the hands of the new generation. With the recent uprising that toppled the old government, it has been proven again that the youth is a force to reckon with.

And now that graduation is fast approaching, the youth is being challenged to take the responsibility to improve their lives. So before you start browsing through the job ads, why not take some time off by paying attention to things that you usually ignore? Our garbage!

Why don't we start with the basics? After all, knowing the ABCs of garbage management will make a whole lot of difference in our lives. Not only will you be contributing to the cleanliness of the country, you'll also be making life easier for your moms!

Garbage can be classified into three categories: biodegradable, recyclable and residual.

Biodegradable are, of course, substances that can be broken down by nature. Common examples are left-over food, kitchen wastes, leaves and other garden waste.

Recyclable materials, on the other hand, are things that may be used again in some form such as car batteries, glass bottles, steel and all kinds of paper.

Residual are the things that can be hazardous to people and animals such as hospital waste, tires and styrofoam.

There are many ways of disposing of your garbage. Utilizing landfills is, of course, the system the government is currently implementing. You can see them everywhere with the Payatas and Carmona landfills. Incineration is also another way of dispose our trash. However, the two mentioned are hazardous not only to the environment but to the people as well. So what's the best way to get rid ourselves of those stinking garbage? Composting!

Compost is a mixture of decaying leaves, manure and other nutritive matter for improving and fertilizing soil. You can dig a hole in your backyard or use drums for composting.

The method of composting is simple. Start by digging a one-cubic-meter hole in your garden and set the soil aside. It is best to throw in leaves, leftovers and kitchen waste for faster decomposing. Remember to sprinkle the garden waste with enough soil and water it every now and then to hasten decomposing. In one or two months, you can already use the compost to enrich your garden soil. It is that easy!

The residents of **Dasmariñas Village** and the **Urdaneta Apartment Condominium** dwellers have already been using this method to dispose their garbage. The whole community, which includes both the elders and the youth, is involved in solving this smelly problem. Especially the young ones, they recognize their part in making sure that their place is clean and green. After all, the youth are the ones who will inherit this land.

Graduates, take heed! Before you embark on your journey to conquer and clean the world politically and socially, I suggest you start literally cleaning your own home. This will be one of the best gifts you'll ever give to the world!

IF you want drums like these already marked for segregation, they will be made and delivered to you by Mang Louie.Call him 842-2070 or 568-5892 to 97. Cost of the 4 drums, painted, labeled and delivered is Pesos 500.

COMPOST BINS

NO MORE GARBAGE!

One of the best ways to deal with the garbage crisis is by making a compost bin. Especially for households that have backyards or gardens, only a small amount of lot is required to make a compost bin. Organic materials such as grass clippings, leaves and tops from vegetables can be composted to yield an excellent mulch and soil conditioner. Here are the instructions on how to make your own compost bin.

1. Begin construction by cutting footings, posts, divider supports, back rails and covers. Cut filler strips and divider supports.

2. Assemble the two ends first. Nail posts to divider supports so that the sides of the divider supports are flush with outside edges of posts. Use 16-penny (16d) galvanized box nails from the 2 x 6 post. Then, nail one post assembly flush with front end of footing, and the other set back 1 inch from the back end of footing, nailing from footing up into post with 16d nails.

3. Install dividers on both ends of bin. Attach top and bottom dividers first, then, nail center divider in place. Use 10d galvanized box nails through dividers. Note that all dividers are nailed flush with post at back of partition and are set back 1 inch from edge of front post to allow room for door boards.

4. Nail filler strips to divider supports between dividers at front of partitions. Use 8d nails. Strips fill in spaces between dividers and form a continuous slot for door boards.

5. Assemble the 2 center partitions in the same way but nail divider supports to centers of posts. Then, nail 3 dividers to each side of supports and attach filler strips. Nail covers to lower inside dividers to close off pocket formed by these dividers and footings. Use 10d nails.

6. Place the 4 partitions on level ground in the location where you plan to place your compost bin. Give footings several liberal coats of an approved preservative, allowing it to dry between coats.

7. Nail back rails to the 2 end partitions first with 8d nails. Check position of partitions. They should be square with back rails. Move bin into its final location, leveling ground first if necessary.

8. Drive the 2 outer galvanized pipe supports into ground with a sledgehammer. Keep them tight against faces of end posts and secure them to posts with pipe straws and galvanized-sheet-metal screws. Make sure partition posts remain plumb.

9. Position the 2 center partitions 3 feet in from each end and attach them to rails with 16d nails. Check that partitions are square with rails and that posts are plumb, then pound in remaining pipe supports and attach pipe clamps with sheet-metal screws. Measure distances between divider supports in each section and cut door boards to fit in slots.

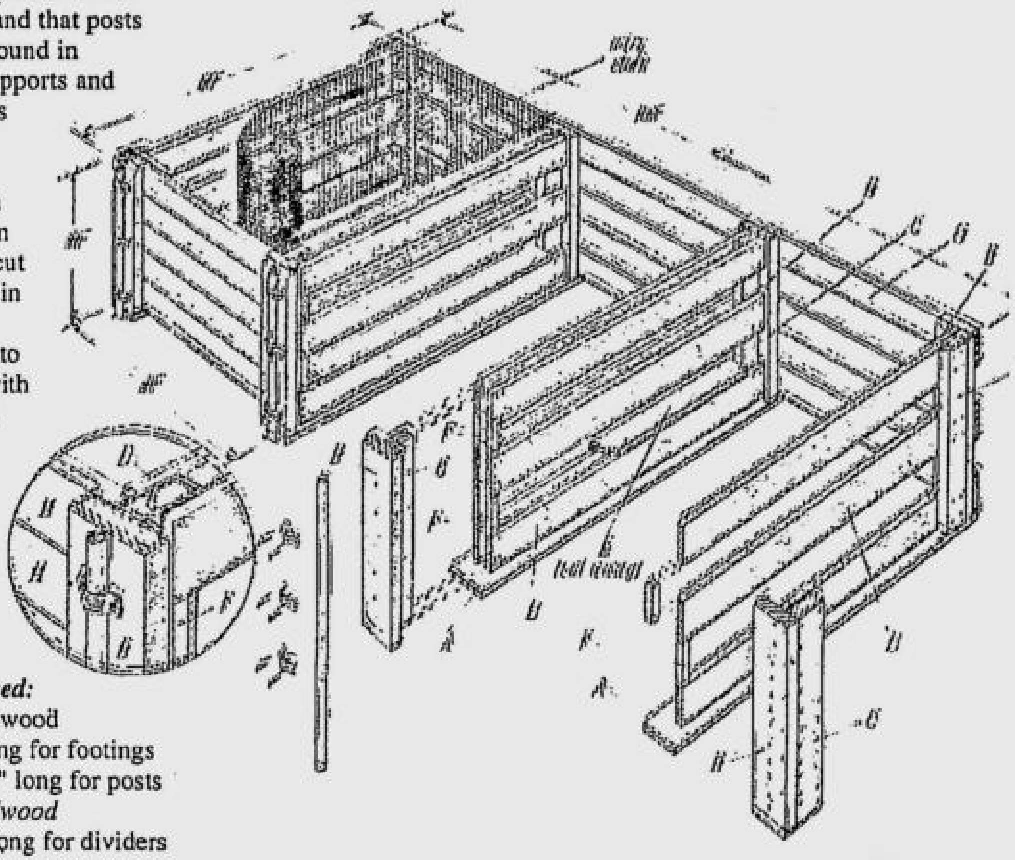
10. If you plan to stain or coat bin with preservative, do it before applying wire cloth. Then nail cloth to dividers and back rails with galvanized staples.

Materials to be used:

2 x 6 rough redwood
4 pieces 60" long for footings
8 pieces 34 1/2" long for posts
1 x 6 rough redwood
18 pieces 54" long for dividers
3 pieces 108" long for back rails
10 pieces cut to fit for door boards
1 x 1 redwood trim
12 pieces 8" long for filler strips
1 x 4 rough redwood
2 pieces 48 1/4" long for covers
2 x 4 rough redwood
8 pieces 34 1/2" long for divider supports
Galvanized water pipe (3/4")
4 pieces 6' long
Hardware and miscellaneous
16d galvanized box nails
8d galvanized box nails
10d galvanized box nails
12 galvanized pipe straps 3/4"
24 galvanized sheet-metal screws 1" x #8
45' galvanized wire cloth (1/2" mesh), 36" width
Galvanized staples
Wood preservative

REPRINTED FROM WOOD PROJECTS FOR THE GARDEN

ORGANIC materials can be composted to yield excellent soil conditioner



How to manage your garbage

- Wastes should be segregated in three categories: food and animal wasters, returnable to factories and residuals. Things that can be returned to factories include paper, plastics, bottles, cans, etc., while residuals include household wastes such as sanitary napkins, diapers, cotton buds, batteries, pens, tetrapak, etc.)
- The recyclable items may be sold to junk shops or to *diyaryo* boys.
- Rubber tires can be shredded or palletized and mixed with asphalt.
- Garden wastes and wood debris, especially those coming from constructions sites can be converted into charcoal.

Discover The Artist In You: The Craft Studio

In this idyllic surround-ing, one is inspired to create ceramic originals.

TWO enterprising ladies—Marilen Espiritu and Carmita Francisco have parlayed their love for art by setting up The Craft Studio at Marilen's Alabang Workshop.

In this idyllic surrounding, one is inspired to create ceramic originals. The Studio glazes and fires them to polished perfection.

The Craft Studio was launched last Christmas in two bazaars set up in Alabang's Cuenca Park where a tent in the soccer field became venue for inspiration and creativity. Underneath trees, villagers and their families trooped towards the innovative booth to do some ceramic painting—creating personalized gifts for the season. Three-year-old Pico Guingona happily designed a mug for his lolo Peping that said "Resign."

The Peñaranda kids did a collaborative plate with words of endearment for their mom. Other customers who visited the booth were top jeweler, Hans Bruhman and wife Maria, who spent the morning doing a pitcher and a cheese platter. "This is truly delightful," said Hans. Also seen were Margie Moran and her two kids, Monica and Gabby, who equally loved their painting session together.

The Craft Studio was again a big hit at the Family Day of Bazaar of Woodrose, where a tent was pitched up in the school's campus this time. It was enjoyed by students, parents and teachers alike, so much that the school started conducting some of their art classes at the Studio's home in Marilen's Alabang residence.

It's interesting to note that quite a number of people express their frustration at painting. "I really don't know how to paint," a newcomer exclaims, or "I wouldn't know where to start!" Carmita, however, is quick to reassure any distressed artist that one doesn't have to be a Van Gogh to create because there are numerous stencils, stamps and sponges to help in the designing process. The concept is similar to a child working on a coloring book. All you have to do is paint with wild abandon! Try to forget all the rules and structures that may restrict and limit your creativity.

It's as easy as 1-2-3 to announce their flyers and correspondingly, there are indeed three essential steps to the whole process. Step one is to pick your own materials from the bisque you want to work on (the unglazed object like a mug, tile, bowl, plate, etc.) to the several colors you intend to use. Once you've chosen everything you need to complete your personalized piece, you are given an apron and brought to a table where brushes, sponges and other tools are provided.

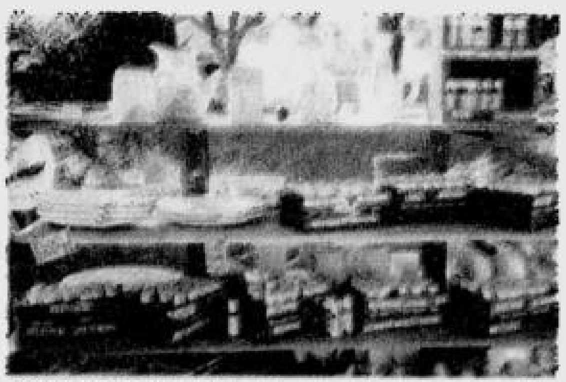
Step two may take a whole morning or afternoon of fun. It all depends on how inspired you are to create your masterpiece. A word of caution though for those passionate in nature, ceramic painting is one of the most addicting pastimes! Once you start, you'll simply want to paint more and more!

Step three is glazing and firing. After you have painted and signed your pieces, The Craft Studio will glaze and fire them for that refined and professional finish. It takes about a maximum of 10 days for the finished product to be picked up at 122 Saranggani St. Ayala Alabang where The Craft Studio is now open. All you have to pay for is the price of the piece you have chosen.

The Craft Studio can also arrange parties like showers, meetings and children's parties. Painting cermaics is a great alternative to clowns and balloons, and most importantly, it's something that everyone in the family can enjoy together.

Artist Henry Braulio gives painting lessons on Tuesday afternoons or by appointment for those interested to take the craft a step further. For reservations or inquiries, call Carmita at 842-3444 or Marilen at 842-3279. This summer, The Craft Studio will offer more workshops for your creative ability!

THE CRAFT STUDIO
HAVE FUN
BE CREATIVE PAINT YOUR OWN CERAMIC PIECE
19, 2000
CARMITA Francisco and Marilen Espiritu with members of the Zonta Club of Muntinlupa and Environs, where The Craft Studio was launched to benefit "Sagip," the club's center for battered and abused women and children, during their Christmas Bazaar.


BISQUES of all kinds, plus a wide array of paints are available at The Craft Studio.

THE CRAFT Studio is now housed at Marilen's Alabang Workshop at 122 Saranggani St. Ayala Alabang Village. Reservations may be made at 842-3279.

MODEL-EDITOR Romina Urra (Carmita's daughter) sets up a table for John Rocha's kids alongside Ines Davila and Ines Borromeo, who now have weekly sessions at The Craft Studio.

MARGIE Moran Floirendo and children, Monica and Gabby, did personalized fish plates as Christmas presents for the family.

All About Manners

1

BY CONCHITINA SEVILLA BERNARDO

THIS issue is all about graduations and proms, summer and projects. So we will dedicate this section to that all important prom night and answer some of the questions that have come in.

From Chiqui Valletta:

Q: What suggestions do you have for prom gowns? Sometimes it is easier to just get some opinions and then decide. Please print some fashion shots that we can all refer to. My friends and I follow your articles closely and would really welcome some suggestions.

A: Here are some fashion clips that I gathered for you. I hope they will help you plan a gown that will serve you well, even after the prom. If chosen properly, with the right fabric, and executed carefully, your gown can give you much wear. Remember that if you are going to spend, it must be worthwhile. Here are classic and versatile suggestions:

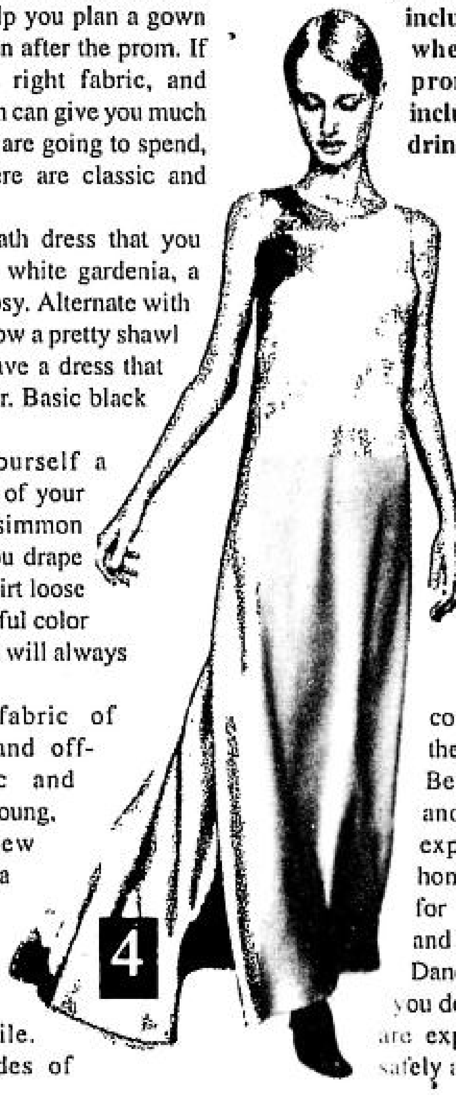
1.) A basic black sheath dress that you can just accessorize with a white gardenia, a fuchsia rose or a lavender posy. Alternate with pearls, long beads or just throw a pretty shawl of bright colors, and you have a dress that will wear and wear and wear. Basic black is always a winner.

2.) You can give yourself a beautiful glow on the night of your prom, with a chiffon persimmon gown that is strapless. If you drape it on the bodice, make the skirt loose and flowing. This is a beautiful color for dark skin and a dress that will always be unforgettable.

3.) A light sheer fabric of Chantilly or fine lace, and off-shouldered is dramatic and seductive. Beautiful for the young, glowing skin of the new graduate, and certain to be a dress that you will wear with much flair and élan.

4.) This is a timeless gown that can be made of crepe fabric or even voile. Choose light pastel shades of powder pink, sky blue or even light yellow. In tropical Philippines, they are ideal for a summer evening

5.) For the men here is an example of what is a real formal wear. This is an evening suit or a tuxedo, with buttons instead of studs. A nice bow tie that is slightly dotted, or even colored, like a burgundy, makes a statement. Wear the right cuff links, black socks and the right evening shoes. It can be a laced up Oxford shoes or an elegant pair of black patent leather shoes.



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From Melody Singson:

Q: When I invite a guy to the prom, am I expected to pay for everything? I am already paying for the ticket, which includes the dinner in the hotel where we are holding the prom. The drinks are not included. Should I pay for our drinks?

A: No, the one that should pay for the drinks should be your date. Bring some money, however, just to make sure that you are covered for any other expenses.

From Mekoy Silos:

Q: Just what is expected from me as a prom date? Please let me know, as I want to do everything right.

A: Send your prom date a corsage, either for the wrist or the lapel. Dress appropriately. Be on time. Meet the parents and ask what time you are expected to bring your date home. This night is especially for her, give her the attention and the time that is due her. Dance only with her, and be sure you do not get intoxicated, as you are expected to bring her home safely and sober.

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3

Please continue to send your e-mail to *conchitina@pacific.net.ph* or *cbernardo@inquirer.com.ph*

THE FINE LINE BETWEEN COSMETICS AND DRUGS

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Act (FD&C) defines cosmetics as articles intended to be applied to the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance without affecting the body's structure or functions. This definition includes skin-care creams, permanent waves, hair sprays, perfumes, lipsticks, fingernail polishes, eye and facial makeup, permanent waves, hair colors, deodorants, baby products, bath oils, bubble baths, and mouthwashes, as well as any material intended for use as a component of a cosmetic product.

Products that intend to treat or prevent disease, or otherwise affect structure or function of the human body are considered drugs. Cosmetics that make therapeutic claims are regulated as drugs and cosmetics, and must meet the labeling requirements for both. A good way to tell if you're buying a cosmetic that is also regulated, as a drug is to see if the first ingredient listed is an "active ingredient". The active ingredient is the chemical that makes the product effective, and the manufacturer must have proof that it's safe for its intended use.

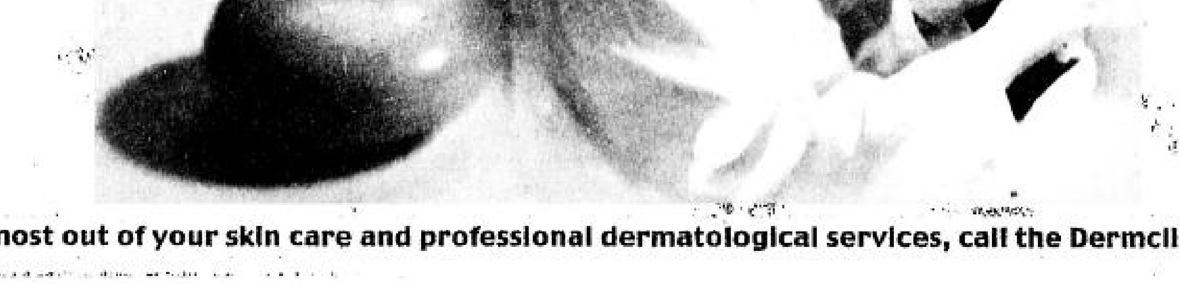
For products that are both drugs and cosmetics, the regulations require that active ingredients be listed first on these products, followed by the list of cosmetic ingredients in order of decreasing predominance. Examples of products that are both cosmetics and drugs are dandruff shampoos, fluoride toothpaste, antiperspirant deodorants, and foundations and tanning preparations that contain sunscreen.

Before products with both cosmetic and drug classification can be marketed, they must be scientifically proven safe and effective for their therapeutic claims. If they are not, the Bureau of Food and Drugs considers them to be misbranded and can take regulatory action.

Dr. Vinson B. Pineda, F.A.A.D. President and Head Dermatologist of Dermclinic, cautions everyone from going to beauty parlors that pose as skin clinics. "Some so-called beauty salons today try to pose as real skin clinics to attract patients. They can offer facials and skin peelings, pimple treatment and wart removal like authentic skin care or Dermatology clinics. But the question there is, will the patient be really satisfied with the services they can get? Cosmetologists have different training procedures and would not necessarily qualify as real dermatologists. It takes years of training for dermatologists to have the in-depth knowledge they have right now. Furthermore, dermatologists treat each patient differently, and have the expertise to know how to maximize the benefits for individual persons, " explains Dr. Pineda.

Dermclinic has qualified medical doctors to give professional skin care based on real dermatology. Dr. Pineda makes sure that every Dermclinic has the latest skin and hair care technology to deal with every patient's concern. With more than 30 years of experience, Dermclinic has kept its services highly professional and ethical. "The safety of the patient comes first. Thus, any dermatological procedure should not be performed by untrained hands; the risk is just too high. Otherwise, infection due to mismanagement of acne, scarring due to mishandling of equipment used for wart removal, inflammation of the face, hyperpigmentation, and even disfigurement could occur. These things usually happen to patients of cosmetologists who have no sufficient training yet managed to pose as medical specialists and invaded the realm of dermatology," concludes Dr. Pineda.

Thus, in choosing between Dermatology and Cosmetology to answer your skin care needs, be conscientious and weigh the facts carefully. Wrong decisions might save you a few hundred pesos, but the long-term results are damaged and scarred skin that you have to pay for the rest of your life.



"Every person has his [illegible] expertise and God wants his people [illegible] and excel in their respective skills. [illegible], however, to put God first in everything [illegible] is stated in Romans 8:28, 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' "

Dr. Vinson B. Pineda, F.A.A.D.
[illegible] Head Dermatologist of Dermclinic

If you want to get the most out of your skin care and professional dermatological services, call the Dermclinic Hotline at 818-6274 / 813-0164

THREE generations—Rica Garcia, Deeda, Nelly Lacson Gonzales

HELEN Yuchengco Dee

BRIDE'S father, Tony Garcia

DITAS Verzosa Chuidian

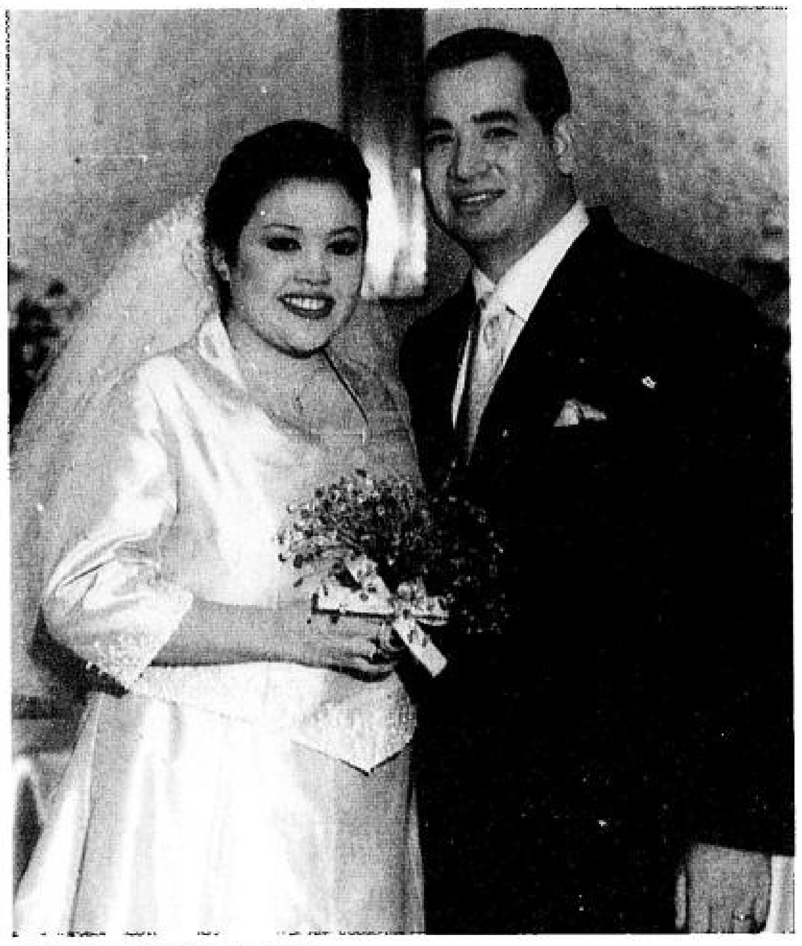
FROM left are Margarita and Chuching Tambubting and Ginny Carlos

FROM left are Paz Yuchengco, Cecile Limjoco, and Rica Garcia.

RICA Garcia (seated) Mari Vargas and Daisy Payumo.

DINA Chuidian and Miguel Fable

STANDING are Menchu Concepcion, Nelly Gonzales. Seated are Mely Hechanova and Daisy Payumo.


MR. and Mrs. Tono Verzosa

Deeda and Tono

DEEDA Garcia was always a joy.

When she was born she brought a ray of sunshine into the lives of the **Gonzales** and **Garcia** clan. She was a smiling, good-natured child that gave everyone around her such positive feelings, specially her grandmother, **Nelly Lacson Gonzales.** She is her first grandchild and **Deeda** will always hold a special place in **Nelly's** heart. **Deeda** grew up into a fine, well-adjusted and enterprising woman. She is described by her father **Tony Garcia**, as "the daughter every father dreams of." To her mother **Rica Gonzales Garcia**, **Deeda** has always been more than just a daughter. She is best friend, confidant, girl Friday and a person that she can always trust to do a job well.

Tono Marty Verzosa belongs to the clan of the **Roces Verzosas.** He is currently manager of Philippinemail.com and is busy in various entrepreneurial endeavors. His father is **Ramon Verzosa** and his mother is **Menchu Marty**. His grandmother **Nenita Roces Verzosa** is well-remembered and loved for her unequalled sense of humor, and her ability to bring laughter to any place she visited. She is the sister of the great **Chino Roces** and **Chucha Roces Prieto** (grandmother of PDI president **Sandy P. Romualdez.**)

Long before the couple met, their families had crossed paths. **Deeda's** grandfather (**Dindo Gonzales**) and **Tono's** grandmother (**Nenita Verzosa**) were together in a freak accident in Mount Sto. Tomas in Baguio.

Deeda and **Tono** met at the Ateneo taking their MBA. It was not love at first sight. In fact, intial encounters were nothing more than civil. However, first impressions changed as they were forced to work on projects together. A mere acquaintance developed into a romance and almost as if by magic, they found out that they had fallen in love.

They had an intimate wedding with only close friends and relatives present at the Subic Bay Chapel. As always, **Deeda's** mother **Rica** attended to every detail with much care, love, and impeccable good taste. Instead of expensive floral decors, she used candles made by the urban poor of Leveriza, where she works incessantly to help **Sis. Christine Tan** together with good friend **Helen Yuchengco.**

The candles of varying shapes and sizes were in the chapel strewn with rose petals and on the different tables with roses of monochromatic shades of pink. Rose, mauve and pink was the color motif that **Deeda** choose. It was repeated in the gowns of her entourage and the gown she wore was a pastel pink. Deep fuchsia and red contrasted the pastel colors. Deeda had a most unusual bouquet. Instead of flowers she carried a cluster of Swarovski crystal mini flowers. Gems of finely chiseled crystals that can be handed down to her future generations

It was a meaningful wedding of two people very much in love and looking forward to a lifetime of shared bliss and happiness forever. **Deeda** and **Tono** will be taking a cruise from Istanbul to Athens for their honeymoon.

FROM left are Tony Garcia, Deeda, Tono, Menchu Verzosa and Rica Garcia

MARCOS and Gelena Roces

PETE Felix and Margaux Orosa

GROOM'S mom, Menchu Marty Verzosa and Elsie Arce Romero

TONY Marty and Tina Delgado

JOAQUINITO Roces (left) and Cesar Gabaldon

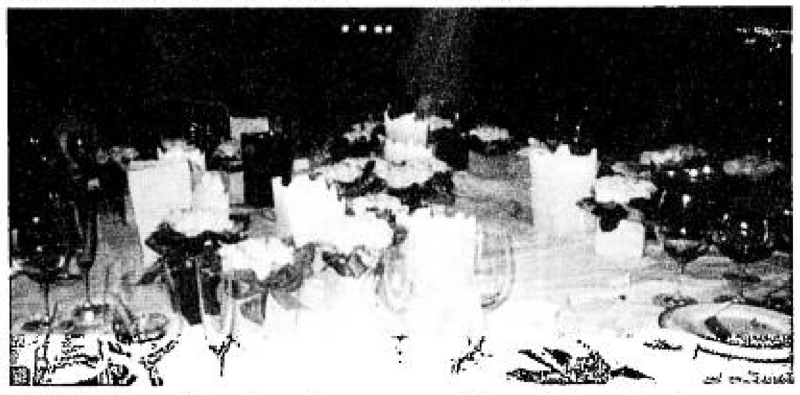
MARGA and Antonio Marty.

RUBY Meyer and Paing Hechanova.

MARTIN and Sheila Roces

MONICA and Sandy Ocampo

RENNA H. Angeles and Chiqui Gabaldon


CANDLES made by the urban poor made beautiful centerpieces.

Petnet Western Union Ties Up With BPI For Money Transfer Services

ON Feb. 26, 2001, Petnet Inc., one of the authorized agents of Western Union Financial Services International has signed a sub-agent agreement with the Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI), the acknowledged leader in universal banking in the country.

The unique partnership brings together two strong corporate entities that have been trading for 150 years, as Western Union Financial Services International and BPI were both founded in the mid-19th century.

Petnet chair and CEO, Adrian Ocampo, is expected to further increase the coverage for Western Union, which currently has more than 4,500 money transfer service locations throughout the Philippines.

Western Union Inc. is the leading provider of money transfer services with more than 96,000 locations in 186 countries globally allowing quick, easy and user-friendly money transfers to any corner of the world.

Echoing Western Union's core values of speed, reliability, convenience, trust and value, Petnet has also prioritized its sub-agents service quality and continues to expand its network across the country from 2,000 locations in 2000 to 3,000 this year, making it the largest private Western Union agent in the country and Asia.

The unprecedented growth of Petnet was recently recognized at the Western Union International Agent Meeting held in Cannes, France, when the company was honored with the "Best in Network Growth Award." It is the fastest growing agent in Asia today for Western Union Money Transfer.

"In our desire to provide greater convenience to our customers and in our efforts to make more Filipinos aware of Western Union's money transfer services, we have tapped the branch network and electronic banking capabilities of the country's top bank," said Petnet president, Anthony W. Lehmann.

"We are delighted to announce this enviable partnership with BPI and to demonstrate our commitment, once again, to expand our network with Western Union Money Transfer to provide the maximum convenience to better service our customers."

BPI, described by the Far Eastern Economic Review as "the oldest, yet most technically advanced bank in the country," offers the most far-reaching financial services in the country because of its leadership in electronic banking.

BPI currently operates a total 863 onsite and offsite ATMs to complement its network of 676 online branches, making it the biggest combination of ATMs and branches with a single bank. This makes BPI an ideal channel for quick money transfer services in today's fast-paced world.

BPI has more than P368 billion in assets, P50 billion cash in capital funds, P170 billion in trust funds, P271 billion in deposit accounts and P180 billion in loans. BPI's merger with Far East Bank in 1999 created one of the largest companies listed on the Philippine Stock Exchnage with a market capitalization of P142 billion.

ENJOYING a new partnership. Western Union's Ric Tynes, Tony Lehmann, with BPI SEVP Gigi Montinola at cocktails. The unique partnership brings together two string corporate entities that have been in existence for 150 years.

MONEY TRANSFER
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MINUTES LANG... WORLDWIDE NA!
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BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

A FORMAL tie-up for money transfer services was recently signed by officers of Petnet-Western Union and the Bank of Philippine Islands. At the Manila Golf launch were (from left) Petnet president, Anthony Lehmann, chair Adrian Ocampo and Area VP for Asia-Pacific Ric Tynes. SEVP Aurelio Montinola III, SVP Carrie Ibarra and SVP Cesario de Leon were the BPI signatories.

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Which one will go home from the prom
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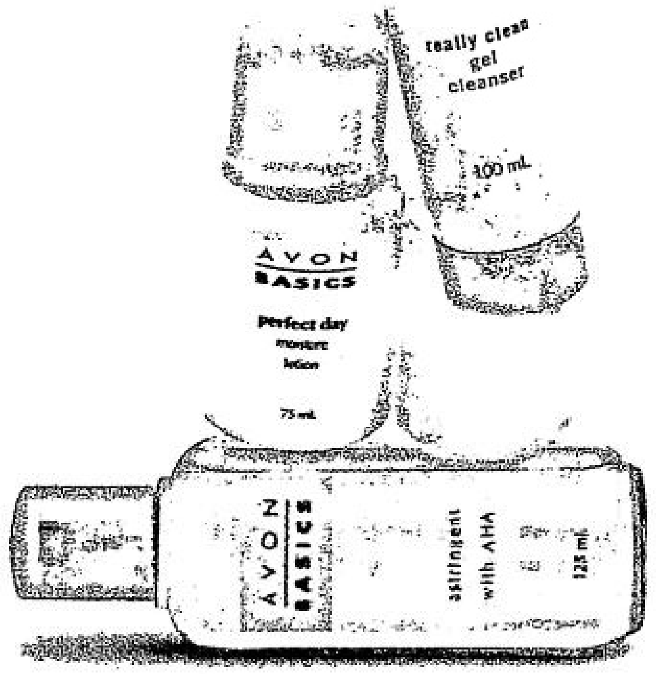
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*"Give the Blemish a 1-2-3 punch
it will never forget!"*

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Saturday SPECIAL

NESTOR U. TORRE, Editor EDMUND L. SICAM, Associate Editor

Eddie Garcia directs again after 11 years

BY EDMUND L. SICAM

IN A BUSINESS where you're only as good as your last picture and the audience is as unpredictable as the weather, few can equal the record of actor/director Eddie Garcia who's been making movies for the past 52 years, and shows no sign of slowing down.

The 72-yeard old veteran (that's how old he is, says Eddie, but the CCP Encylopedia of Film lists his date of birth as May 2, 1921, making him 80 years old) has just finished directing "Abakada...Ina" starring Lorna Tolentino, who plays an illiterate mother. It's Eddie's first directorial assignment after 11 years. The project appealed to him because it is no run-of-the-mill drama. No one has ever dealt with illiteracy in a local movie before.

Illiteracy

How does one make a seemingly unexciting theme as illiteracy interesting enough so moviegoers will get engrossed in the movie? Eddie seems confident that the conflicts Lorna's character experiences with her loved ones and society at large will appeal to audiences. Despite his explanations, we are still apprehensive about how the movie will fare, but the director has a string of box office hits to his name so he must know what he's talking about.

Unlike other directors, Eddie has not been pigeonholed into one particular genre. He has directed dramas, action pictures, comedies – a total of close to 30 motion pictures.

His experience as an actor in different types of movies has helped him a lot in not being identified with one particular genre. He's come out as real-life characters in action pictures, shared the screen with the best drama stars, and portrayed humorous characters—henpecked husbands, etc.

Eddie directed Lorna T before, in "Sinasamba Kita," and is all praises for the actress' thespic talent. The role of the illiterate mother fits her like a glove, says Eddie who feels strongly that casting should not be based on friendship or connections with the producer. He resists any producer's attempt to ram an actor down his throat.

He is very particular about the script, making sure that everything is okay before the cameras roll. Eddie does not believe in doing rewrites while the shooting is in progress. That's why it took three months of script revisions before he finally started work on "Abakada."

Eddie says he has not encountered problems, either with veteran stars or the younger ones. When he was directing Nora Aunor in "Atsay," people were warning him that the Superstar was notorious for coming late to the set. No such problem cropped up because Nora was always on time for shooting. As for young stars, the only problem he's encountered had to do with schedules, specially their appearances on TV shows.

No temper tantrums

With all his achievements as a director, Eddie can probably be forgiven for blowing his top once in a while. But he says he doesn't lose his cool on the set. "If I need a cognac glass and someone brings me an ordinary glass, I just say, '*Dapat siguro ay turuan ang* cognac glass *na pumunta ritong mag-isa*,'" he chuckles.

He also doesn't care about billing, saying what the audience remembers is not how his name appears on a billboard, but how his performance went.

He is known, however, to be a perfectionist. Once, while he was shooting in a remote area, he needed a specific type of horse to be used in the scene. The animals had to be transported with great difficulty up a river. When Eddie finally took a look at the horses, he rejected them, so the production had to bring back the horses and come up with what Eddie wanted.

Eddie first appeared in the Manuel Conde classic "Siete Infantes de Lara" in 1949. He promised himself that he would start directing pictures after 15 years in the industry. He got his break three years earlier than scheduled. Sampaguita's Doc Perez asked him to direct one of four segments of a movie called "Sa Linggo Ang Bola," which revolved around sweepstakes winners.

Doc Perez must have liked his work because soon after, he was asked to direct a whole movie all by himself. The movie was "Karugtong ng Kahapon" and starred Sampaguita stalwarts Mario Montenegro, Rita Gomez, Ric Rodrigo and Marlene Dauden. He recalls getting only P 5,000 for directing "Karugtong" and P 1,000 for doing "Sa Linggo."

TOLENTINO. Stars in "Abakada...Ina," Garcia's comeback directorial effort.

GARCIA. Multi-awarded film actor *and* director.

Many awards

Different award bodies have recognized his achievements and honored him as actor and director. The FAMAS has elevated him to its Hall of Fame as best supporting actor and director. He was also chosen best director by the Film Academy of the Philippines for "Magdusa Ka" and "Saan Nagtatago ang Pag-ibig?" Despite his many trophies, he says he doesn't tire of receiving awards because they motivate him to do even better films in the future.

With his seemingly ageless body, Eddie could be directing and acting in movies till he crosses the century mark. What does he think about growing old? "Everybody grows old. I'm not afraid of growing old. I'm not afraid to die. When your time is up...when you gotta go, you gotta go," he says with a wide smile on his face.

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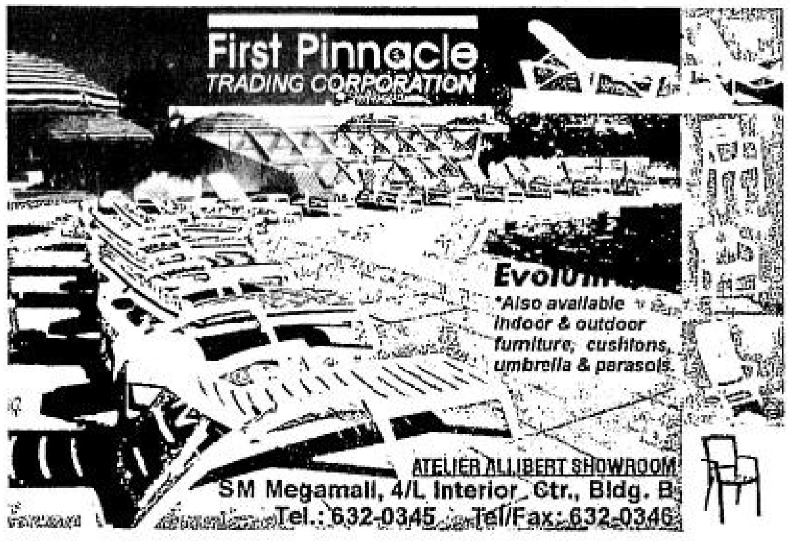

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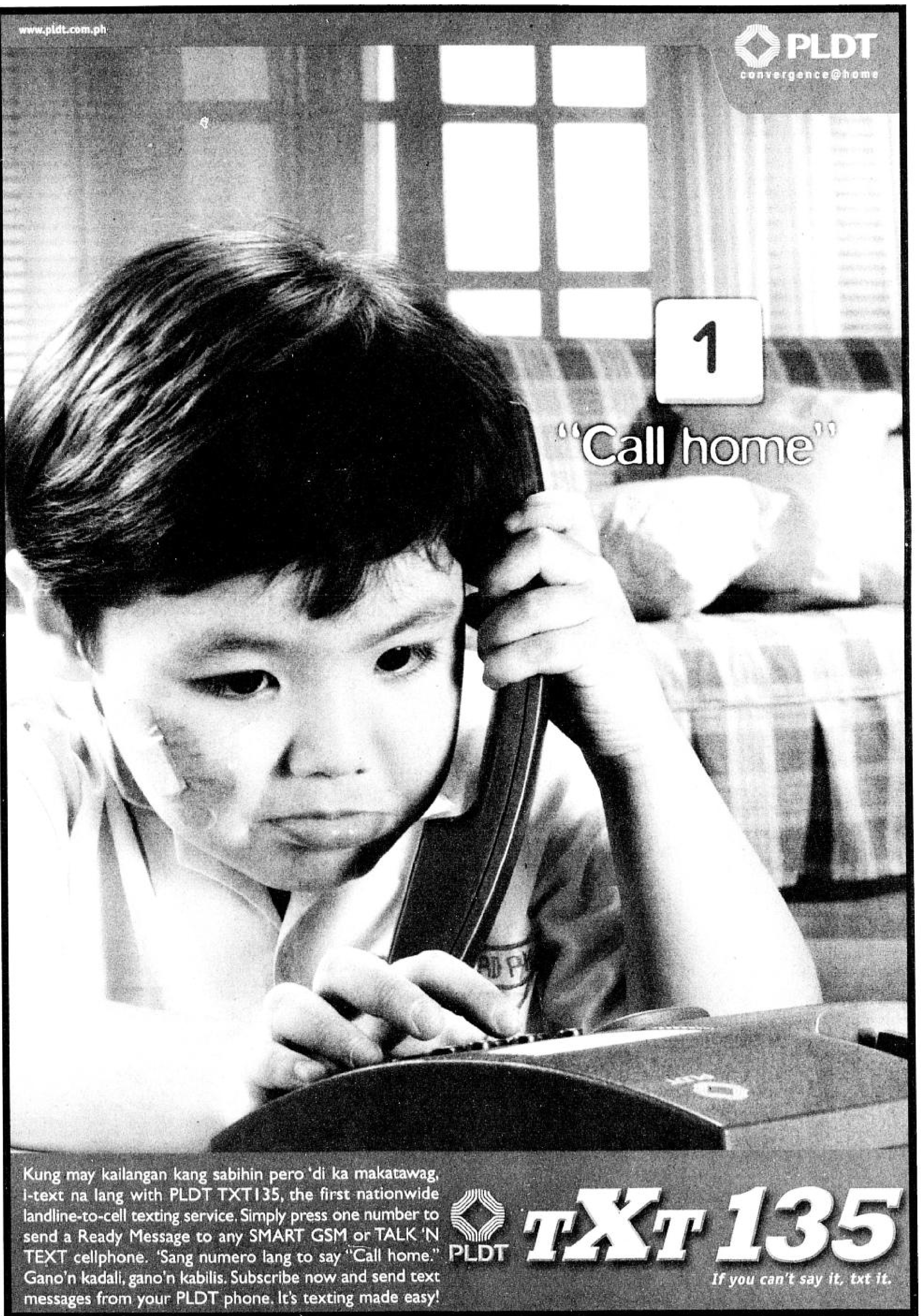

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   - Press 4 for "I love you"
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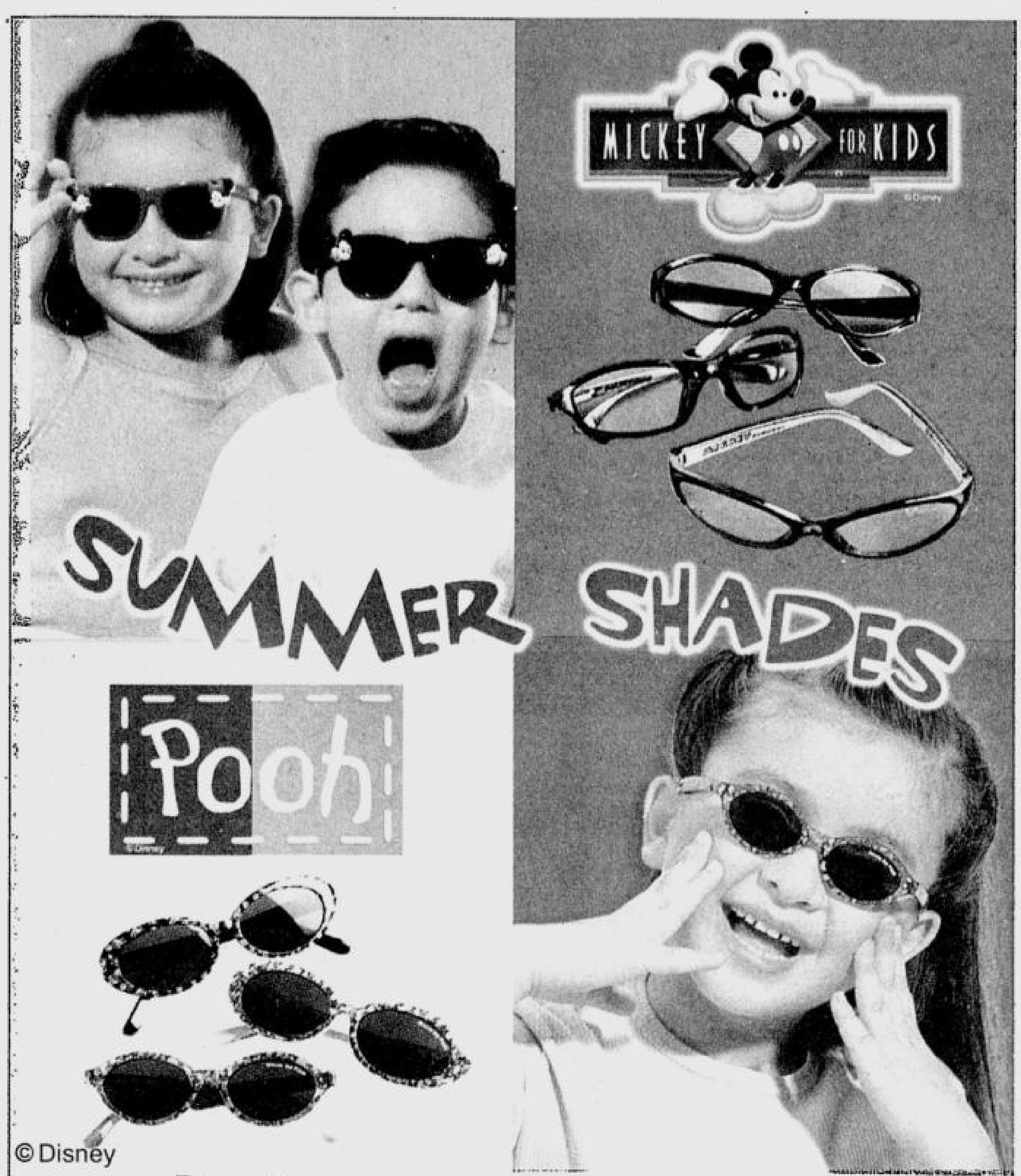
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Outstanding Japanese movies in 'Eiga Sai 2001' filmfest

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE MCO Foundation presents "Eiga Sai 2001: Japanese Cinema Masterpieces" at the Antonio Molina Hall from March 19 to 23 at 7 p.m. The screening schedule:

March 19, "A Class to Remember, 2": A touching portrayal of the problems faced by handicapped high school students and their teachers. Directed by Yoji Yamada (1996).

March 20, "The Yellow Handkerchief": A road film in which three strangers are thrown together, and love triumphs in the end. Yoji Yamada (1977).

March 21, "The Castle of Sand": A dead man is discovered in a railway yard, and a veteran police officer and a rookie are put on the trail of the mysterious killer. Yoshitaro Nomura (1974).

March 22, "24 Eyes": About the relationship between an elementary school teacher and her 12 students. With pre-war Japan as the setting, the pupils' destinies slowly unfold as the country undergoes economic and political upheavals from the 1920s until the end of World War Two. Keisuke Kinoshita (1954).

March 23, "One Wonderful Sunday": Despite their lack of money, Yuzo and his fiancee Masako manage to have many small adventures because Masako's optimism is able to lift Yuzo up from his despair. Akira Kurosawa (1947). Admission is free. Call 818-1403.

'Britney in Hawaii'

Teen pop queen Britney Spears holds a one-hour concert on a private beach in "Britney in Hawaii," which airs on Star World today at 8 p.m. (with replay on Sunday, March 18, at 2 a.m.).

'Batang Maynila'

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts' Cinema Values Reorientation Program presents Rica Arevalo's short film, "Batang Maynila' (Children of the Streets) in a special preview screening at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 29, at the CCP's Audio Visual Room. Credits: Editor, Glenn Cruz; Director of Photography; Production Designer, Katrina Villa; Musical Score and Sound Design, Allan Feliciano. The cast includes Ricky Amar, Mike Robert Makiling and Abdulah Joewil M. Bandiola.

Free cinema pass

Every Thursday this month, the Alabang Town Center holds "Town Nights.Cinema 2+1," a special promo that entitles every buyer of two cinema tickets (for the same movie, screening time and day) to a free cinema pass for one person.

SPEARS. Concert on a private beach.

Simultaneous with this special offer are the Town Nights concerts of Southborder (March 22) and Freestyle (March 29) at the Town Plaza.

TV treats

At 4 a.m. today, March 17, on Viva Cinema, the film on view is the Ronnie Ricketts starrer, "Alex Boncayao Brigade."

At 6 p.m., Star Movies presents "World Championship Wrestling Superbowl Revenge, with six top wrestlers battling for a shot at the coveted Cruiserweight title.

At 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, relive the worst flash floods of the past decade in "Floods."

At 8 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Earthquakes" shows how scientists try to uncover the mystery behind these massive tremors in order to save lives.

At 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, tourists take vacationing to the extreme when they seek out the next big storm in "Twister Tours."

And at 9 p.m. on Star Movies, "Dream Lover" stars James Spader and Madchen Amick.

Movies on TV

On the HBO Channel, Saturday, March 17: 6 a.m., "Dead Dog Walking." 7:45 a.m., "The Last Starfighter." 9:30 a.m., "Route 9." 11:15 a.m., "Footloose." 1 p.m., "Reality Bites." 2:45 p.m., "Thrill Seekers." 4:30 p.m., "Catch a Falling Star." 6 p.m., "A Slight Case of Murder." 7:30 p.m., "In Pursuit." 9 p.m., "Deep Blue Sea." 10:45 p.m., "Regarding Henry." 12:30 a.m. "Soldier." 2:15 a.m., "Midway." 4:30 a.m., "Voices From a Locked Room."

Sunday, March 18: 6 a.m., "Plain Clothes." 7:30 a.m., "Starstruck." 9 a.m., "Dangerous Liaisons." 11a.m., "The Alarmist." 12:30 p.m., Deadlocked." 2 p.m., "Bone Daddy." 3:30 p.m., "Paulie." 5 p.m., "Flowers for Algernon." 6:30 p.m., "Sabrina Goes to Rome." 8 p.m., "Dragnet." 9:45 p.m., "The Haunting." 11:35 p.m., "Shakespeare in Love." 1:30 a.m., "Action 11: Dead Man Floating." 1:55 a.m., "8MM." 4 a.m., "The Red Violin."

On the Cinemax Channel: 6 a.m., "South Cross." 7:30 a.m., "Showdown in Little Tokyo." 8:45 a.m., "Afterburn." 10:30 a.m., "Mallrats." 12 noon, "Gulag." 2 p.m., "Romeo and Juliet." 4:15 p.m., "Kiss Toledo Goodbye." 6 p.m., "Beyond Paradise." 7:30 p.m., "Problem Child, 3." 9 p.m., "The Third Miracle." 11 p.m., "Showdown in Little Tokyo." 12:15 a.m., "Da Vinci's War." 1:50 a.m., "Southern Cross." 3:30 a.m., "The Fourth War." 5 a.m., "Cinemas of the World: The Heirs of Luis Buñuel."

Sunday, March 18: 6 a.m., "Spy." 7:30 a.m., "The Stepdaughter." 9 a.m., "My Girl, 2." 10:45 a.m., "Official Denial." 12:15 p.m., "A Civil Action." 2:15 p.m., "Money Talks." 3:45 p.m., "Breakfast at Tiffany's." 5:45 p.m., "The Wyvern Mystery." 7:30 p.m., "The Substitute." 9 p.m., "Universal Soldier: The Return." 10:30 p.m., "The Stepdaughter." 12 midnight, "For Richer or Poorer." 1:55 a.m., "Money Talks." 3:30 a.m., "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral." 5:30 a.m., "Cinema Secrets Ep. 12: Effects for Laughs."

Official 'Harry Potter' Website launched

NEW YORK—Warner Bros. recently launched the official "Harry Potter" Web site, www.harrypotter.com -- the much-anticipated site of the upcoming big-screen feature, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone." The website offers a rich, dynamic environment that will evolve and grow over time as exclusive features and elements are added, including interactive fan opportunities, games and the latest information and news updates on the feature film.

Imagination

"The enchanting characters and vivid imagery of the 'Harry Potter' books have captured the imagination of millions of fans worldwide," said Kevin Tsujihara, Executive Vice President, Warner Bros. New Media. "The Web site will amplify the reader's experience and provide a great entree to the world of 'Harry Potter' for those who may not have yet explored the stories. We want harrypotter.com to reach and bring together fans of all ages around the globe as they tap into an exceptional interactive experience and immerse themselves in the magical world of 'Harry Potter.'"

Warner Bros. is inviting other fan-managed "Harry Potter" sites to link to the community through the harrypotter.com hub, and in turn, Warner Bros. will provide unique "Harry Potter" images and icons for use on their sites. Additionally, Warner Bros. will be asking fans for their feedback and insights, which will be highlighted on harrypotter.com.

Unlike other movie-based Web sites that rely heavily on behind-the-scenes production information, harrypotter.com is a comprehensive site and community forum dedicated to the world of "Harry Potter." "The magic of Harry Potter's world is something Warner Bros. is working very hard to preserve," said Don Buckley, Senior Vice President, Theatrical Marketing and New Media, Warner Bros. Pictures. "Therefore, we feel it is very important that we not reveal the secrets behind the magic."

Regular updates

The Web site, which will be regularly updated with new features and news, welcomes visitors with an animated short of the famed Hogwarts Express train, which whisks Harry and his classmates from Platform 9 3/4 at King's Cross station off to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Once inside the site, fans can choose from the following "Harry Potter"-inspired destinations:

Hogwarts offers would-be Wizards the chance to apply to be "students" at the exclusive Hogwarts school. Take your turn answering a series of sage riddles from the "Sorting Hat" to determine in which of four houses you will study.

The magical promenade Diagon Alley features "The Owl Post," where fans can send friends (or enemies!) a customized e-postcard or a "Howler." "Flourish and Blotts" offers Muggles the chance to download and print bookmarks and specialized "Harry Potter" coloring pages.

The Daily Prophet will give exclusive peeks into the world of "Harry Potter" and information about the upcoming "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" feature film, including Web-exclusive material such as still images, trailers, clips and production details as they become available.

Message boards

When Muggles want to share information, they can gather at Platform 9 3/4, the site's community area, complete with message boards connecting "Harry Potter" fans from around the world.

To further reach the fans who have made "Harry Potter" a global phenomenon, Warner Bros. will soon roll out local-language-customized versions of the "Harry Potter" Web site in German, French, Spanish, Italian and Japanese, with other language-customized sites scheduled to follow.

"HARRY POTTER". Enchanting characters and vivid imagery.

US TV contains more sex, research study concludes

WASHINGTON—US television shows have significantly increased their amount of sexual content and usually fail to emphasize the need for safe sex, a new study has revealed.

Biggest study

In what it described as the biggest ever such study, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation that monitors social mores, said sexual content featured in two-thirds of all television shows in the 1999/2000 season compared to only about half in 1997/ 1998.

While the amount of sexual content has increased, the study found that the proportion of shows with safe sex messages remained steady at 10 percent.

"Every time there is sex on TV, there is an opportunity to deliver useful information to young people," said Kaiser Family Foundation Vice president Victoria Rideout.

"While some shows are taking advantage of that opportunity, nine out of ten are not," she added in a statement.

Situation comedies

The study, called "Sex on TV: Content and Context," was conducted by a University of California professor and examined 1,114 shows aired from October 1999 to March 2000.

It found that the biggest increase in sexual content was among situation comedies, where the share rose to 84 percent of all episodes from 56 percent.

Hollywood has come under increasing pressure in recent years to reduce the amount of sexual content and violence in television shows, particularly during early evening hours when young children watch them.

Reuters

Ralph and Kiko's dilemma

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

LAST week, my column took a break from spotlighting actors running for public office. This week, we resume with a slightly different twist that involves nonactors married to actresses.

Question

We open with this question: If you were married to two of the most popular and accomplished actresses the country has ever known and you decided to run for public office, would your campaign be a bed of roses or a crown of thorns?

This is the question I am sure many people ask everytime they think of the situation of Kiko Pangilinan and Ralph Recto, who are both senatorial candidates. As we all know, Kiko is the husband of Megastar Sharon Cuneta while Ralph is the better half of Star for All Seasons Vilma Santos.

While both candidates are very competent, it seems they are having a hard time convincing some people of their merits. They are still identified by the masses (which comprises the majority of the voting force) as Mr. Cuneta and Mr. Santos.

And who can blame the people, really? Vilma was a phenomenon starting from the time she played the title role in "Trudis Liit," and her stellar career has been matched only by her archrival, superstar Nora Aunor.

Mass adulation

Sharon is the biggest star of the '80s. Considered as the first multi-media star (the movies, recording and television), Sharon defined trends and caused mass adulation. In fact, she's one of the most awarded box-office queens of her time, unrivalled by her contemporaries.

But, going back to Ralph and Kiko, the public should know that, before they married their superstar wives, they lived lives worthy of respect and admiration. Kiko has been a lawyer by profession while Ralph comes from the political clan of the Rectos. Both are highly educated, goodlooking, come from good family backgrounds and are articulate and intelligent—with or without their wives.

Between the two, Ralph has the added pressure of living up to the expectations of people because he's the grandson of the revered Claro M. Recto.

Unfortunately, people don't seem to know this. News has reached me that, whenever they campaign, people always expect them to have Sharon and Vilma in tow. Worse, the masses seem to feel shortchanged whenever Kiko and Ralph campaign by their lonesome. Sometimes, whenever they give away campaign paraphernalia (especially their pictures), people would ask for the photos that show them with Sharon or Vilma.

Fans' day

When they filed their candidacy, both were accompanied by Sharon and Vi, so the event became a big fans' day, with people clamoring to get close to their superstar wives more than the candidates themselves.

If you were in their shoes, wouldn't you feel uneasy and frustrated? And to think that Kiko and Ralph never promised their wives' participation in their campaigns. Also, if they assume public office, Sharon and Vi's popularity will not have anything to do with how they perform in the senate.

Of course, being good wives, Sharon and Vilma always stand by their men. In fact, they often cite their husbands as their "teachers" and "advisers" on vital issues.

But let's face it: before their getting married to Vilma and Sharon, the *masa* were unaware of Kiko and Ralph. It can be remembered that Kiko ran for councilor with not much success. And now he's running for the senate!

As for Ralph, very few people knew much about him, except for the prestige of his last name. Both were already bright and talented, but they did not have the charisma and pulling power that Vilma and Sharon enjoy, which eventually rubbed off on them.

Theory

My theory about this relates to the "love team" mentality of our people, who consider husbands and wives as a package deal.

But, reviewing the history of movie love teams, whenever a separation or falling-out happens, it is always the woman who gets all the sympathy, with much improvement in her career, to boot.

Does this also apply in real life? Apparently, yes.

My advice to Ralph and Kiko is this: You must try to conduct your campaigns independently. Make people understand that, in the end, it is not the popularity of your wives that matters in your political moves, but your own merits. If your intentions are sincere and if you truly deserve the office, people will finally come around and acknowledge both of you as politicians of consequence.

As for the voting public, try to be serious in selecting your candidates. Do not look at popularity or campaign gimmicks, because this is not a movie that will fade to black once the lights go on. Your choices will determine how the country is run! Your lives and the lives of the next generation depend on the competence of the candidates you will vote for in the coming elections.

RECTO AND PANGILINAN. Still identified by the masses with their celebrity wives.

Given time

Like what's written in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, "There is a given time for everything and a time for every happening under heaven:

A time for giving birth, a time for dying
A time for planting, a time for uprooting
A time for knocking down, a time for building
A time for tears, a time for laughter
A time for mourning, a time for dancing
A time for throwing stones, and time for gathering stones
A time for keeping, a time for throwing away
A time for fearing, a time for sowing
A time to be silent, a time to speak
A time for loving a time for hating
A time for war, a time for peace"

To the Vilmanians and the Sharonians, let this be a time to reflect on the merits of each candidate, especially Ralph and Kiko.

Look into your hearts, open your minds—and let your conscience be your guide.

How celebrities can boost worthy causes

By Nestor U. Torre

IN THE United States, many celebrities go out of their way to use their popularity to support a wide range of worthy causes.

Personal benefit

In the Philippines, however, stars generally use their celebrity for their own personal benefit. How can we help them open their eyes to the good they can do for society as a whole, instead of just their own careers and bank accounts?

Perhaps, if more stars are able to do this, they would no longer be tempted to run for public office in order to be able to "serve" the public, as many of them are doing now.

Example

Perhaps the example provided by "The Vagina Monologues" can be useful in this regard. In the States, Eve Ensler's theater piece started out as a three-actor revue. In time, however, the production reached out to established female performers who used their popularity to make the show better-known—and, more importantly, to promote its goal of ending violence against women.

When "The Vagina Monologues" was first mounted in the Philippines, it was also an intimate, three-actor performance piece.

Presence

Last Jan. 26 and 27, however, its local producer, the New Voice Company, took its cue from its American counterpart and expanded the production to include in its cast such celebrities as Cherie Gil, Belinda Panelo, Lynn Sherman, Coritha and Cynthia Alexander. Granted, some of these names aren't biggies, but their presence helped popularize the show and its message.

Last Feb 12, producer Monique Wilson was invited as special guest to the "V-Day" celebrations in New York. The show, "Take Back the Garden… A Gala Benefit of Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues," was held at Madison Square Garden with an audience of 18,000. The show had over 100 stars and other performers!

The guest actresses included Jane Fonda, Glenn Close, Oprah Winfrey, Calista Flockhart, Claire Danes, Brooke Shields, Rosie Perez, Marisa Tomei, Amy Irving, Isabella Rossellini, Queen Latifah and Terri Hatcher.

In the New York event, actresses took over individual monologues, with some monologues being spoken by up to 20 performers. There were also testimonies from survivors of violence such as genital mutilation and rape by women from Africa, Afghanistan and the United States.

As the photos accompanying this article show, the celebrity presence on the V-Day show wasn't only impressive, it was downright overwhelming. It gave the show decided clout, making it easier for it to get many people to support the cause it was upholding.

Involvement

In comparison, the local version of "The Vagina Monologues" has enjoyed less stellar support. What can be done to match American show biz's involvement, not just in this particular show but in other worthy causes as well?

One way would be to suit the celebrity to the right cause. Take Unicef's choices as its celebrity roving ambassadors: they don't tap just any star, but celebrities who are known for their sensitivity and heart—Audrey Hepburn, Liv Ullman, etc.

Similarly, we can link local celebrities with causes that are "right" for them. For instance, Gary Valenciano can most credibly support campaigns to inform the public about diabetes, because he's been coping with the illness for most of his life.

Sports

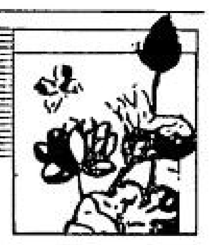
Other examples: Action stars to boost campaigns for sports and for law and order. Regine Velasquez for scholarship competitions for musically gifted but poor students. Gloria Romero and Eddie Garcia for projects for senior citizens. Nonoy Zuñiga for countryside medical missions. Nora Aunor for self-help and small-business programs for farmers, factory workers and fishermen…

The big question is, would these and other big celebrities agree to support causes such as these? Knowing some of them, we're sure they will. The thing is for them to feel a personal affinity to the cause they're boosting, and to be assured that the whole campaign is on the level—and that nobody is making money from it.

HOLLYWOOD stars like Teri Hatcher, Marisa Tomei, Jane Fonda and Brook Shields went all-out in their support for the "V-Day" celebrations in New York last month.

Cruelty to animals

LOTUS POND



R. Valencia

(Conclusion)

"For no better excuse than than we wish to devour them, we are shamefully forsaking that one obligation which, above all others, we should recognize—to put our unique knowledge of the difference between good and evil, between mercy and cruelty, before our heart-hardening greed…

Obsession

"Cruelty is the worst sin of all. It might almost be called the only one. A form of obsession with self and excluding consideration of others, cruelty has to go before any other reform of ourselves or our environment begins to be possible…

"There is, as we all know, no justification for cruelty… Excuses provide the easy way out, the path of least effort and continued self-indulgence. The educated and intelligent person who pays lip-service to morality and has at least intelligently faced the inexcusable nature of flesh-eating, is more difficult to excuse then the unthinking, who have thought about little and see no alternative.

"Most of us prefer to fall back on the childish defense of 'but I want to' rather than accept the necessity for self-reform. We dispense our compassion with absurd selectivity—shedding crocodile tears over the bullfight or the mauled bird brought in by the cat, while in the next breath crooning over the tenderized flesh of the castrated steer or the caponized fowl…

"The environmentalists who have suggested that man is like a fatal disease that the earth has been unfortunate enough to contract are not indulging in absurd exaggeration. We have the power of choice. We can help what we do. Animals cannot. It is up to us to realize the need to become an influence for good rather than for evil—to learn to live symbiotically instead of like parasites, and rogue predators who kill without need or even hatred.

Victims

"The fox, some may protest, kills in excess of need, and therefore animals are no better than man. But we cannot justify our own actions by citing those of a fox or any other animal when man behaves far worse by breeding and slaughtering thousands of pheasants, grouse, cattle, sheep, pigs and other victims of his 'sport' and stomach…

"If we think about it—and not many of us do—there are two main nightmares in our world—what men do to each other and what they do to other species. Cruelty begsets cruelty, violence breeds violence, and the exploitation and greed of which man is so uniquely capable of cannot simply be switched off like a light when he turns from his rape of the animal world to the difficult problems of social relationships within his own species…"

Let us consider these points instead of laughing them off. Let us think with compassion before we eat, and wisely choose food which is not delivered to our table through cruel means.

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mister Donut

A little to the right...

SWITCHING CHANNELS

The role of awareness and perception in the elections

By Edmund L. Sicam

AWARENESS and perception will play a major role in determining who will win in this year's local and national elections. Awareness is important because the public cannot vote for someone it doesn't know. More important, however, is perception or what people think of the candidates.

Built-in advantage

In this regard, media personalities as well as show biz figures have a built-in advantage. Deposed president Joseph Estrada is the best example. Because of his popularity as an actor, most voters were immediately aware of his name. Then his many movie roles as champion of the oppressed and the poor created a favorable perception. It came to a point where voters could no longer distinguish between the reel and the real Erap.

In the ongoing senatorial race, broadcaster Noli de Castro has been topping every survey because of his high awareness level among the radio and TV audience. For the past 10 years, he has been seen almost every evening on "TV Patrol" and "Magandang Gabi, Bayan" and heard every morning on DZMM. ABS-CBN has a strong presence in broadcast homes nationwide, so the name of Noli de Castro is as familiar as soft drink and beer brands.

As far as perception goes, Noli projects himself as a hard-hitting broadcaster and a leader in public service, one who exposes anomalies in the government and private sector and gets things done. This is the image he projected on "MagandangGabi, Bayan."

Although he is not as good-looking as other TV personalities, Noli seems to have convinced voters that what matters more are his achievements as a broadcaster. In the last elections, Senator Loren Legarda's pretty face contributed greatly to her topping the senatorial race.

Boycott

After Erap's exit, certain sectors have called for the boycott of show biz personalities running in the elections. Noli'as case, however, is different. Though admittedly, his shows sometimes dwell on show biz matters, he is still perceived as a news personality.

Former senator Orly Mercado, himself a broadcaster, explains that unlike singers and movie stars, broadcasters must do research and study because they tackle different topics, qualities required by a legislator.

There are those who raise the issue of corruption in Noli's media background. Text messages have been circulating accusing him of being an AC-DC (attack collect-defend collect) broadcaster. Noli disputes these allegations, saying he wouldn't have lasted long in the business (he's been in broadcasting for 20 years) if he were corrupt. He adds that no one has offered concrete evidence to back up their accusations.

DE CASTRO. As familiar as softdrink and beer brands.

Mercado believes that's the price Noli has to pay for being the topnotcher. People want to pull him down.

Rough sailing

Other ABS-CBN news personalities who are running are congressional candidates Ronald Estella and Gilbert Remulla. Though Ronald may have some following because of his appearance on the early morning show "Alas Singko y Medya," he's in for rough sailing against former executive secretary Ronnie Zamora and incumbent congressman Jose Mari Gonzales.

Gilbert Remulla, who's running in Cavite, started out as a news reporter and has appeared on other public service programs that did not rate as well as "TV Patrol." His good looks could have easily landed him a role in the teen shows of ABS-CBN but he opted to pursue a career in journalism after finishing mass communication in UP and getting a masters degree from Columbia University.

Even as a high school student at the Ateneo, he was already interested in acting but he gave that up for basketball as a member of the school's varsity team. Eventually, he decided on pursuing a career in broadcast journalism.

TV ownership

Cavite has very high TV ownership because of its proximity to Manila, so Gilbert's awareness level should be good, though not as high as Noli de Castro. His image is that of someone young going up against the more mature candidates in his province. This cuts both ways since his youth could be equated with inexperience but it could also signify to the voting public, specially the young voters, that it's time for the new generation to opportunity take over.

Opportunity

It helps, of course, that he belongs to the Remulla political clan, which has the machinery to make him win. Why did he decide to run? It was an opportunity that just fell on his lap when the incumbent congressman decided to seek another position.

Finally, we look at the candidacy of "Aawitan Kita's" Armida Siguion-Reyna, who decided at the last minute to go against another media personality, Teddy Boy Locsin, in the Makati congressional race.

"Aawitan Kita" has been on the air for more than two decades and is an institution on television, but it was Armida's position as chairman of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board that is etched in the minds of voters. Armida is highly opinionated so news programs as well as talk shows always want to feature her.

During the controversy over the supposedly "obscene" films being approved by the board, Armida was a constant presence on the small screen. Although her views on censorship and other related topics made a lot of sense, what spoiled it for her was her combative posture, a no-no on a cool medium like television. Her smirk also turns viewers off since it projects her as someone superior to the other guests on the show.

Having worked with Armida, we can personally attest to the fact that this image is totally wrong. She is not as abrasive as she looks on TV.

What could hurt her chances is her loyalty to the deposed president.

She has said, though, that the former president is not financing her candidacy. Still, the fact that she clung to Erap till the last minute may lose her a lot of votes in Makati. There will of course be voters who will admire her for not turning *balimbing* even when the going got tough.

Performance

The bottom line, however, is that it is actual performance, not perception, that will determine a candidate's fate. Again, Erap is the best example. His image as a champion of the poor crumbled when all the evidence in the impeachment trial pointed to billions of pesos in unexplained wealth

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Film history comes to life at the LVN Museum

By Royce Ervas Ambrocio

(Conclusion)

BUT it's not only Charito Solis who gave pieces for display at the museum. Nida Blanca and Delia Razon also donated some of their dresses and photographs, though both women prefer to keep their own collections, perhaps for sentimental reasons. In fact, Nida has boxes of costumes and albums of photographs in her library. In contrast, her onscreen dance partner, Nestor de Villa, has failed to preserve his own film souvenirs.

Portrait

Museum curator Bernard Fernandez said that there are other potential acquisitions, but so far none has materialized. One is the life-size portrait of Leopoldo Salcedo done by an American painter. The painter was looking for an individual or an institution as the recipient, and the LVN Museum was one of those considered. But the plan was foiled by Salcedo's death. Fernandez last saw the portrait at the star's wake and didn't dare ask for it, out of respect for the grieving family.

Another batch was made up of trunks of old stuff belonging to Rogelio de la Rosa, as promised by his wife. Unfortunately, Fernandez lost contact with her. Still another possible acquisition is the suitcase full of scripts currently in the possession of someone who worked as assistant director for actor-turned-director Gregorio Fernandez.

Such mementos are significant in the light of the growing trend among institutions to secure their place in society through rediscovering their own history by means of documentation and collection of artifacts.

Small place

With all these things in exhibit, one can only marvel how such a small place can hold so many pieces. Fernandez reveals that there are still more articles he wants to display but can't due to lack of space. The need for a larger venue has been his main concern for sometime now. People who have visited the museum—film students, movie buffs, workshoppers and tourists—have expressed hope for a bigger place for such a unique museum.

Fernandez says they should act fast, because at the age of 80, he is not getting any younger or stronger!

But in spite of the growing popularity and media coverage the museum has been enjoying, it has yet to be officially recognized by authorities So far, as Fernandez said, the closest working relationship they have had with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts was when the NCCA borrowed Nida's costumes for an exhibit.

The museum is also not yet featured in tourism brochures but the coverages of TV shows like "Balitang K," "Cityline," "Extra, Extra," "Knowledge Power" and "Wake-up Call" make better advertisements as these reach more people

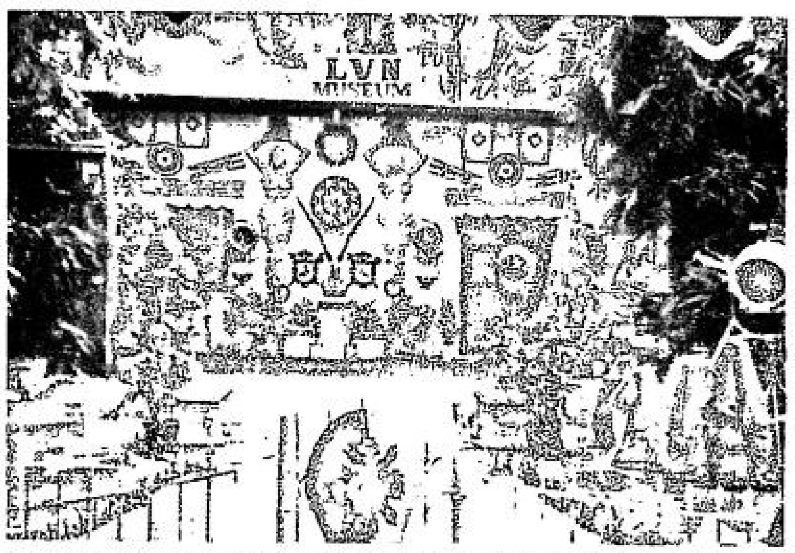
Video documentation

In return for the interviews, Fernandez asked for copies of the tapes for video documentation, which can prove valuable in the future.

To prove the museum's gradual introduction to mainstream popular culture, Fernandez recalls that a multinational food and beverage company attempted to borrow numerous pieces which they planned to exhibit at the Glorietta. He declined when he saw the long list of pieces to be borrowed. He was even more adamant when he learned that the pieces would be out of their home for a year.

Priceless pieces

The obvious care Fernandez devotes to the pieces is understandable, considering that any damage done is irreparable as they are all original and have become priceless in their own right. He also admits that one of his driving forces in maintaining the integrity of the museum is his gratitude to Doña Sisang for taking him as her ward. He reminds me that last Oct. 29, they celebrated the 123rd birth anniversary of the LVN matriarch. Indeed, there can be no other greater gift than to preserve her legacy.



IN SPITE of the growing popularity of the museum, it has yet to be officially recognized.

It is not difficult to see that the LVN Museum has the potential of becoming a national treasure we could be proud of. As such, it needs the care and help of all concerned Filipinos, if we want it to be carried over to the future

But don't take my word for it, go visit LVN Museum and you'll know what I mean. The museum is open Mondays to Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

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Rush, Caine lead powerhouse cast in 'Quills'

ACADEMY Award-winning actors Geoffrey Rush and Michael Caine and Academy Award nominees Kate Winslet and Joaquin Phoenix topbill the Fox Searchlight presentation "Quills." Based on the Obie Award winning play by Doug Wright, the movie boldly imagines the final days of the notorious Marquis de Sade, which were spent in the confines of the Charenton Asylum.

Battle

A blistering black-comedy thriller, the film is also about the battle between lust and love and between the brutality of censorship and the unpredictable consequences of free expression.

"Quills" playfully turns Sade's story into a sexy, sinister and at once shattering tale he himself might have written.

The motivation at the core of Doug Wright's scathingly witty stage play and subsequent film adaptation is to channel the Marquis' blasphemous and morally challenging sense of mischief, eroticism and creative triumph into a moving tale of madness and love.

It was this provocative tone, part scandalous entertainment, part bold inquiry that power-director Philip Kaufman hoped to capture on screen.

As "Quills" opens, Sade has the luxury of a large furnished two-room cell at Charenton, where he can release his thoughts in the form of writing, an exercise that the Abbe Coulmier, played by Phoenix, thinks will help the Marquis overcome his darker side.

Laundry girl

What the priest does not know is that Sade's writings are being smuggled out by a young laundry girl, Madeleine, played by Winslet, and are being published. This incurs the ire of the Emperor Napoleon, who dispatches the cruel Doctor Royer-Collard to silence or treat the Marquis personally.

WINSLET AND RUSH. Complex portrayals all around.

Complicating things is the Abbe's attraction to the laundress who in turn is fascinated to no end with the randy tales coming from her perverse master.

Rush, who won the Best Actor Oscar for his performance in "Shine," is once more nominated for his portrayal of De Sade in "Quills." He obviously has a lot of fun inhabiting the role of the decadent author.

Creeping, leering and stalking, he brings a complex portrayal to the part.

Phoenix, who was nominated at the Golden Globes as Best Supporting Actor for "Quills" and is up of the Oscar equivalent for his performance in "Gladiator," is effective as a young man of God who believes so much in the essence of good in all men that he is willing to grant the Marquis favors that many would not.

Fresh air

Winslet, who won Academy Award nominations for "'Sense and Sensibility" as Best Supporting Actress and as Best Actress in "Titanic," the film that brought her international fame, is like a breath of fresh air in the asylum.

As Madeleine, she is an innocent who is excited by the bawdy tales the Marquis tells.

Two-time Best Supporting Actor Oscar winner Caine, for "Hannah and Her Sisters" and "Cider House Rules," is at his most evil. As Dr. Royer-Collard he subjects his patients to torture to impose his puritanical beliefs.

Direcor Kaufman is known for his excellent work with diverse film topics. Among these are "The Right Stuff" which is about American astronauts, the erotically charged romances "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" and "Henry and June" and the detective thriller "Rising Sun."

"Quills" also features Billie Whitelaw as Madame Leclerc, Madeleine's blind mother, Patrick Malahide as Delbene, Napoleon's right hand man, Amelia Warner as Simone, Royer-Collard's young wife, Jane Menelaus as Renee, the estranged wife of the Marquis, Stephen Moyer as the young architect who gets caught up in Simone's designs and Tony Pritchard as Valcour, the prefect of the asylum.

Which film awards should we believe in?

By Nestor U. Torre

WITH the movie awards season upon us starting this month, how can viewers distinguish between which awards to believe in, and which to question? We'd like to suggest a criterion that some people may regard as simplistic: Does the awards group include Monique Wilson's performance in "Laro sa Baga" in its list of Best Supporting Actress nominees?

We stipulate this because that performance is so obviously exceptional, so if it is ignored by an awards group, that group's discernment is deemed questionable.

Obvious choices

Simplistic? Possibly. But we're trying to make a point: some choices are so obvious that they can be used as touchstones for viewers who feel swamped by the excessive number of movie awards we have to put up with these days.

By that particular yardstick, the recent Star Awards for Movies were subject to question because Wilson's performance wasn't in their list. Contrastingly, it is among the Urian Awards' finalists, so the Urian should be taken more seriously.

On the other hand, the Star Awards for Movies redeemed themselves by giving their Best Picture, Director, Original Screenplay, Cinematography, Production Design and Sound Engineering awards to Mike de Leon and Doy del Mundo's "Bayaning Third World."

On the *other* hand, the Best Actor and Best Supporting Actress trophies given to "Laro sa Baga's" Carlos Morales and Angel Aquino respectively, surprised even their recipients.

How could Morales' performance be deemed last year's best in the male lead category when his character didn't develop all that much in the course of the movie? And Aquino's performance was too vague and skittish to be deemed exceptional.

Right film

Summing up, therefore, the Star Awards for Movies picked the right film in "Bayaning Third World" to give most of its really major awards to, but some of its acting honors left much to be desired.

But what about the other film awards we'll have to deal with this year? The Urian is generally a reliable touchstone for excellence, while the FAP and FAMAS awards are more prone to subjective, "popular" judgements.

Of course, any group can put up awards for anything, but when their choices are way off, they can be harmful because they set the wrong standards for viewers to look out for when making their own evaluations of the movies they see.

That's why we were so critical of the Metro filmfest awards a decade ago, because one of the regular Best Actor winners was an obviously hammy actor whose performances simply couldn't be believed.

So, why did he win all those awards? Well, he made it a point to play historical characters who mouthed a lot of patriotic cliches, thus rating high with the jurors by playing along with the filmfest's preference for movies that promoted love of country, etc.

Noble intentions

But our point was that "noble" intentions don't make outstanding performances, only creative and believable characterizations, plus the thespic skills needed to come up with them.

Then there are the awards that can be "won" for a "consideration" in cash or kind, or both. Some awards jurors are happy enough just to be wined and dined, but others make it known, either subtly or bluntly, "Your entertaining skills are OK, but we need cash!"

Again, these bought awards send out the wrong signals to viewers, so they need to be shown up for the tainted "honors" they are.

Finally, we must tell ourselves not to be so hung up on movie awards, because some of them are not to be believed. Instead, let's all work harder to support the production of really good movies, of which too few are being made in these parts, despite many filmmakers' protestations about vision and commitment, etc.

Genuine talent

How do we do this? We should keep up with the output of our filmmakers and learn to tell the genuine, consistent talent from the charlatan or flash-in-the-pan.

Support the good film workers and scorn the fakes and compromisers, in the hope that, if enough people do this, the worthy filmmakers will keep on making good movies, while the fakes will eventually fall by the wayside.

The inside . . .

(From page D6)

Carlo idolizes Christopher de Leon because he can host, sing, dance and act. "*Magaling siya at* versatile. *Puwede siya sa* drama *at* comedy," he says.

John wants to follow in the footsteps of Aga Muhlach, Onemig Bondoc and Richard Gomez. Aside from his pretty face, John wants to be recognized for his acting talent.

Stefano admires Richard Gomez for being an excellent sportsman. "*Mahilig din ako sa* sports. *Kapag may nagustuhan akong* sport, *pinag-aaralan ko talaga.* I give it the time and effort it requires. I also want to be a versatile actor like Richard."

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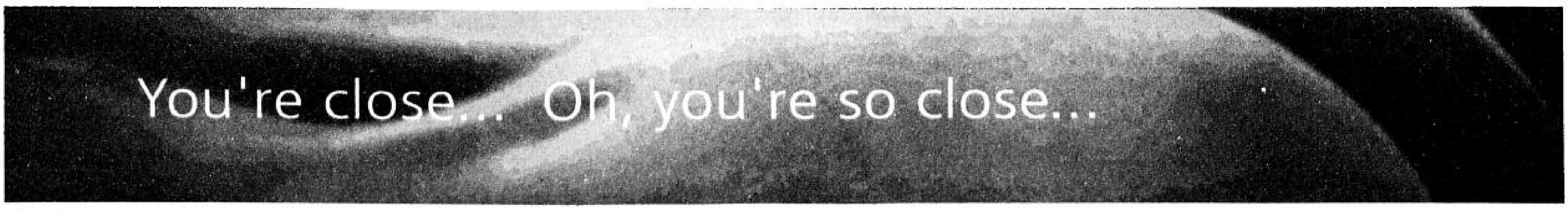


YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MARCH 17 – 23

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	E! 31
SAT	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:30 Da Body en Da Guard 9:30 Pinoy Exposed 10:00 Keep on Dancing 11:00 Loren / "F" 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 SOF 9:00 Lotto Draw 9:15 Road to Sydney 10:15 Fashion Watch 10:45 Olympic Primer 11:15 National Network News 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Princess Tenko 6:30 Sailormoon Super S 7:00 Easy Money 8:00 Ispup 9:00 Eezy Dancing Non-Stop 10:00 Saturday Night Movies 12:00 Diagnosis Murder	5:30 Brigada Siete 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:30 GMA's BEST *Blame It on the Bellboy* 11:00 Master Showman Presents 12:30 GMA Network News 1:00 The 700 Club	6:00 SaBayan 7:00 Conan 8:00 Martial Law 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse 11:00 Business Class 11:30 Late Night Movie	5:30 H2K 7:00 Viva Premiere Night 9:00 Kagat sa Dilim 10:00 Gags Must Be Crazy 11:00 Night Lines	6:30 Journey of Allen Strange 7:00 Two of a Kind 7:30 Seventh Heaven 8:30 Party of Five 9:30 Studio 23 *Just Cause* 12:00 MTV	3:00 Q Show Case 7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Grammy Nominations 8:00 Grammy Pre-Show 10:00 Grammy Fashion Review 11:00 David Letterman Show 12:00 E! Coming Attractions
SUN	5:30 Knowledge Power 6:00 Sharon 7:00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Richard Loves Lucy 9:30 ABS-CBN Presents 11:00 The Weekend News 11:30 Oh No, It's Johnny	6:00 Uncut 6:30 Ugat 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 Primetime Specials 10:00 National Network News 10:30 Business & Leisure 11:00 Sultada 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	5:00 Tarzan 6:00 Savage Dragon 6:30 Janperson 7:00 Sing-Galing 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Sunday Night Specials 11:00 Johnny Walker Powerplay 11:30 Sentinel	5:30 Partners Mel and Jay 7:00 Biloy's World 7:30 GMA Telesine 9:30 Sunday Night Box Office *Executive Decision* 11:30 Che-Che Lazaro Presents 12:00 GMA Network News 12:30 The 700 Club	5:30 Hollywood Squares 6:00 Compañero y Compañera 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Kids Say the Darndest Things 8:30 Stark Raving Mad 9:00 Sunday's Big Event *Race the Sun* 11:00 Sunday Report	4:00 PBA 9:00 Sinemaks 11:00 In His Steps 11:30 PBA Moments	6:00 Born Free 7:00 Dawson's Creek Revisited 8:00 The Nanny 8:30 Spin City 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 Jack & Jill 10:30 Digital Tour 11:00 Sunday Night Movies	5:00 Quartermaster Window Shop 7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night Movies 11:00 Bikini Open	6:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Karen Carpenter* 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Frank Sinatra* 10:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Liberace* 11:00 60 Minutes 12:00 E! Coming Attractions
MON	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Kaya ni Mister, Kaya ni Misis 9:00 Judy Ann Drama Special 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Rosalinda 11:30 Correspondents 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 Pilipino Box-Office 9:00 Lotto Draw 10:15 National Network News 11:00 Job Network/Fora Medica 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Macron 1 7:30 Freakazoid 8:00 By Request 9:00 Spy Games 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Arlyn dela Cruz on Special Assignment 11:30 High Tide	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Pinoy Blockbusters *Don Pepe* 9:30 Kiss Muna 10:30 Front Page 11:00 I-Witness 12:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Michael Hayes 9:00 The X-Files 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Honasan Reports	7:00 Blow By Blow 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Viva Proudly Presents 10:30 Super Bouts 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Amerika Atbp.	6:00 MTV Diyes 7:00 Lassie 7:30 Making the Band 8:00 Dawson's Creek 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Points of View 11:30 Nightman 12:00 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 E! Mysteries & Scandals *Bruce Lee* 8:30 Talk Soup 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Phyllis Diller* 10:00 Wild On: *Dixie* 11:00 David Letterman
TUE	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Oka Tokat 8:30 Regal Presents 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Rosalinda 11:30 Pipol 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:30 Cartoon Hour 7:00 Thief Takers 8:00 PBL 9:00 Lotto Draw 10:15 National Network News 11:00 Business Insight 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 G.I. Joe 7:30 Superman (Animated) 8:00 Hercules 9:00 That '70s Show 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Kontak 5 11:30 F/X The Series 12:30 The Big News (Replay)	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Bubble Gum Crisis 7:00 Virtua Fighter 7:30 Kool Ka Lang 9:00 Kasangga 10:30 Front Page 11:00 The Probe Team 12:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 The Practice 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Jay Sonza's Tapatan 11:30 Ngayon Na Pinoy	6:30 Saklolo Abogado 7:00 DMZ TV 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Now Showing 11:00 Ronda Trese	6:00 MTV Most Wanted 7:00 Greed 7:30 Baywatch 8:30 Angel 9:30 Grapevine 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Nightman 12:45 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 E! Mysteries & Scandals *Dack Rambo* 8:30 Talk Soup 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Ray Combs* 10:00 Wild On: *Hawaiian Islands* 11:00 David Letterman
WED	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Pwedeng-Pwede 9:00 Katapat, Fred Lim 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Rosalinda 11:30 Isyu 101 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 HBO Boxing 9:00 Lotto Draw 9:15 Tapatan Walang Atrasan 10:15 National Network News 11:00 Nature Trip 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Sabrina 7:30 Suddenly Susan 8:00 Frasier 8:30 Friends 9:00 E.R. 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Musika Atbp. 11:30 Police Academy	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Beh Bote Nga 9:00 Larawan 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Imbestigador 12:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Roswell 9:00 It's A Miracle 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Wrestling 11:30 Kasangga Mo'y Langit	5:00 PBA 10:00 Subic Bay 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 PBA Moments	7:00 Fantasy Island 8:00 Survivor 9:00 Gameplan 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 The Explorer 12:45 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 E! Mysteries & Scandals *Silent Movie Theater Murder* 8:30 Talk Soup 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Wayne Newton* 10:00 Wild On: *The Road* 11:00 David Letterman
THU	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Home Along da Riles 9:00 Maalaala Mo Kaya 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Rosalinda 11:30 Assignment 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 PBL 9:00 Lotto Draw 10:15 National Network News 11:00 Olympic Program 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Guinness World Records 8:00 Soldier of Fortune 9:00 Burning Zone 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Strangers 11:30 New York Undercover Year 2 12:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Bubble Gum Crisis 7:00 Virtua Fighter 7:30 1 For 3 8:30 Viva Sinerama *Gabi Na Kumander* 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Debate with Mare at Pare 12:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Buffy, The Vampire Slayer 9:00 Felicity 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Chicago Hope 11:30 Police Hour	5:30 NBA Game of the Week 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Thursday Nights at the Movies 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 PBA Moments	6:00 MTV Non-Stop Hits 6:30 Be Seen @ MTV 7:00 Greed 7:30 Cineplex 23 *Looking For Richard* 9:30 Guide to Urban Living 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Travel Time	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 E! Mysteries & Scandals *Beverly Hills Babylon* 8:30 Talk Soup 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Linda Sobek* 10:00 Wild On: *On Ice* 11:00 David Letterman
FRI	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Digimon 8:00 Young Hercules 8:30 Star Cinema Presents 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Rosalinda 11:30 Julia 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo Pilipino 8:00 Street Legal 9:00 Lotto Draw 9:15 Pulso ng Masa 10:15 National Network News 11:00 The Scene 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Sliders 8:00 The Big Night 9:30 Normal Ohio 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Friday Box Office	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Pokemon 8:00 Bubble Gang 9:30 GMA Love Stories 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Emergency 12:00 One Cubed	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Malcolm in the Middle 8:30 Dharma and Greg 9:00 City of Angels 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 TV Greats on Friday	5:00 PBA 10:00 Kabayo, Karera, Karerista 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Last Fool Show	6:00 Monster By Mistake 6:30 Batman 7:00 Greed 7:30 Survivor 8:30 Snoops 9:30 Murphy Brown 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Citiline 12:00 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 E! Mysteries & Scandals *Sam Peckinpah* 8:30 Talk Soup 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story *Phil Hartman* 10:00 Wild On: *Sunset Strip* 11:00 David Letterman

PRATTS, MORI AND AQUINO. Their band's music is upbeat and fun.

The inside story on JCS

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Mary Ann A. Bautista

"HI, please feature the three cutest stars on ABS-CBN, "JCS" (John Pratts, Carlo Aquino and Stefano Mori). Can you tell me more about them, their personal lives, love life and their careers? Thanks a lot. — *Lana delos Santos, Sto. Nino, Plaridel, Bulacan*

When John Pratts, Carlo Aquino and Stefano Mori embarked on their "G-mik" Nation Tour in Baguio last year, they were disappointed to know that they only sold 400 tickets. But as soon as the crowd witnessed the motorcade and saw them in person along with Camille Pratts, Angelica Panganiban and Mico, their concert became a hit.

John Pratts recalled that the audience in Baguio was fun-loving and energetic. "*Hindi sila* shy. Alive *na* alive *ang mga tao sa* Baguio."

Debut album

They enjoy touring different places to perform songs from their debut album under Star Records. Their dream is to become a legitimate band in the league of the Eraserheads, Led Zeppelin and Limp Bizkit.

"Our music is laid-back, acoustic, upbeat and fun. Teens can understand our lyrics because they can relate to them. *Walang* depressing *o* profound lyrics," Stefano reveals.

"*Parang* Eraserheads *pero mas bata*," John adds.

Both Stefano and John agree that Carlo is more music-minded because he carries a guitar wherever he goes. Carlo also acts as the soloist of the group and plays the lead guitar. Stefano plays the rhythm guitar while John plays the drums. But they all agreed on the selections for their album.

Aside from music, they all love food and playing billiards.

"*Wala kaming inaayawan na pagkain. Matakaw kami,*" John grins.

Stefano's love for food has pushed him to invest in his own restaurant in Las Piñas. Since he loves Italian and spicy food, Stefano integrates them into his menu. "*Mahilig ako sa* pepper *at sobrang maaanghang na pagkain. Hindi ako masyadong mahilig sa* sweets," Stefano shares.

Normal teenagers

Like normal teenagers, they enjoy listening to the latest bands' CDs, playing games on Play Station and watching movies. Stefano collects toys and robots.

"What sets us apart from other teens? We're working already so we're exposed to real life," Carlo injects.

Stefano and John add that they're responsible and thrifty, too. All their earnings from TV guestings, TV shows and gigs go straight to the bank.

John admits that he has a big crush on the Rexona commercial model. He hasn't been introduced to her yet but he knows that his crush is a member of Batch 9 of Star Circle. John wants to have a chance to work with Joyce Jimenez. "Joyce appeals to me because of her innocent-looking face. I hope she won't mind, *basta* crush *ko siya,*" John blushes.

Stefano loves wearing loose shirts and pants when he goes out on a date or *gimik*. John prefers tight pants and a turtleneck shirt when he makes "*ligaw*." Carlo uses his expressive eyes to attract girls.

"*Si* Carlo, *tahimik lang 'yan. Uupo sa isang sulok at gagamitin ang mga mata sa pagpapa*cute. *Hihintayin niyang lumapit ang mga* girls *sa kanya,*" Stefano grins.

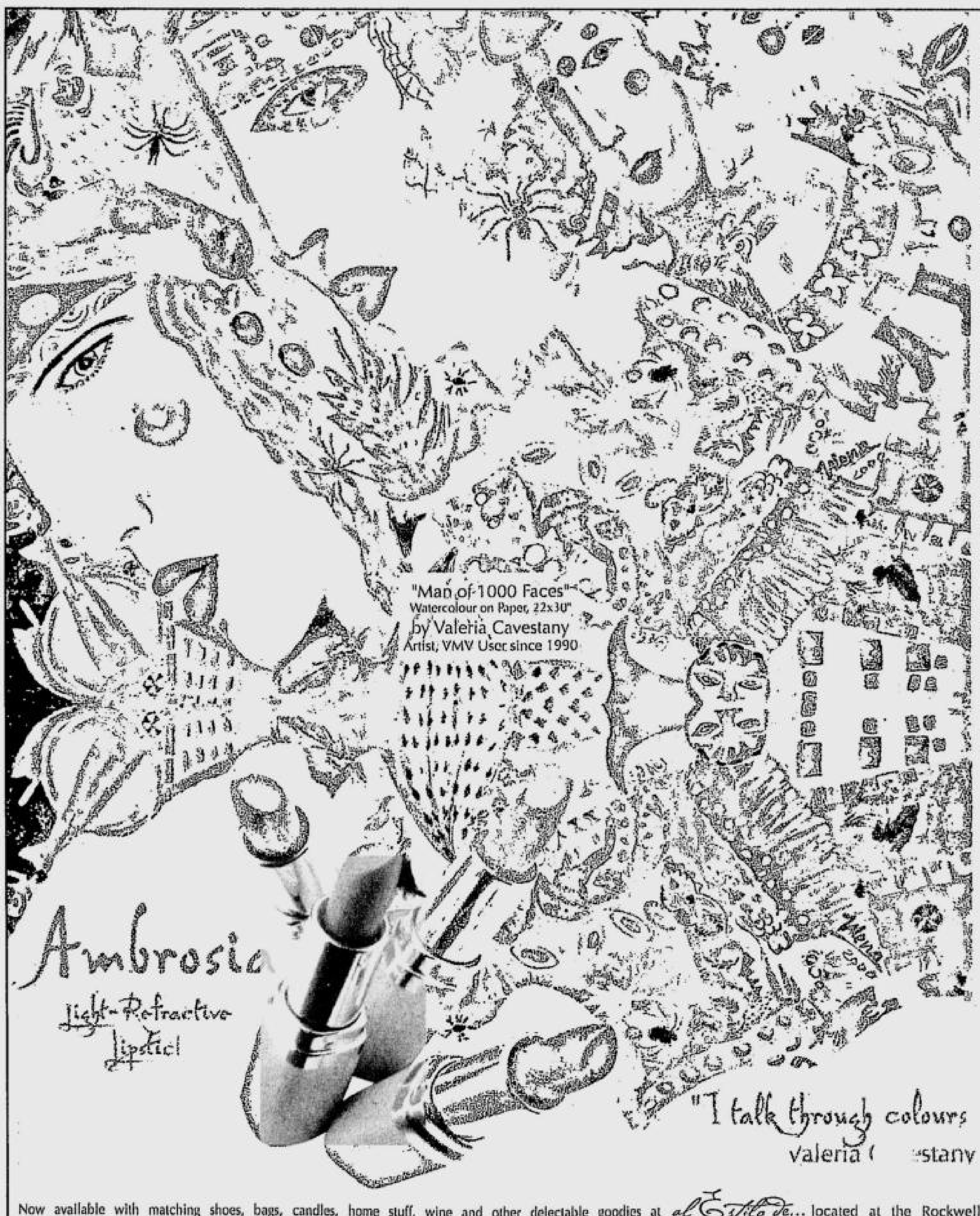
Carlo jests that Stefano utters "Pretty cool, huh" when he's around a girl he likes.

Carlo refuses to deny or confirm the rumor that he has a crush on KC (Kristina Cassandra) Concepcion but admits that he likes Angelica (Panganiban) and Camille (Pratts). "I have a crush on Angelica because she's naïve, *maganda, mabait at masarap kausap. Si* Camille *medyo* moody *pero pareho silang maganda at matalino.* But love is out of the picture yet. I don't want to court anybody because I want to prioritize my career."

Friendship

Stefano feels that his friendship with Camille Pratts allows him to get to know her better each day. But courtship and a serious relationship are out of the question. "Yes, she's lovable, cute and friendly but *hanggang* admiration *lang muna ako.* I don't want to rush into things."

THE INSIDE/ P. D5



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'Panunumpa' composer to be ordained on April 15

BY ARNOLD RIMON MARTINEZ

'Panunumpa'
(Lyrics and Music by JBoy Gonzales, SJ)

Ikaw lamang ang pangakong mahalin
Sa sumpang sa'yo lamang magpakailan pa man.
Yakapin mo'ng bawat sandali,
Ang buhay kong sumpang sa'yo lamang alay,
At mapapawi ang takot sa'kin,
Pangakong walang hanggan.

Ikaw lamang ang pangakong susundin,
Sa takbo-sakdal liwanag ang daan.
Yakapin mong bawat sandali,
Ang buhay kong sumpang sa'yo lamang alay,
At mapapawi ang takot sa'kin,
Pagka't taglay lakas mong angkin.

Ikaw ang siyang pag-ibig ko,
Asahan mo ang katapatan ko.
Kahit ang puso ko'y nalulumbay,
Mananatiling ikaw pa rin.

Ikaw lamang ang pangakong mahalin
Sa sumpang sa'yo lamang magpakailan pa man.
Yakapin mo'ng bawat sandali,
Ang buhay kong sumpang sa'yo lamang alay,
At mapapawi ang takot sa'kin,
Pangakong walang hanggan.
At mapapawi ang takot sa'kin,
Pagka't taglay lakas mong angkin.

JESSEL M. Gonzales, SJ or JBoy Gonzales was about to take his comprehensive examination to mark the end of his theology studies at the Ateneo's Loyola School of Theology when he granted this interview with us.

Culmination

What he was about to do then was take a few steps towards the culmination of his long wait to finally say "yes!" to the Lord as a Jesuit priest.

For many who have seen the blockbuster movie "Tanging Yaman," directed by Laurice Guillen, JBoy's "Panunumpa" was more of a love song.

With its lyrics pledging a promise of undying love, many couples have used this song at their weddings. JBoy said it was okay with him if people felt closer to the music because of its romantic undertone.

The story behind "Panunumpa," however, is actually JBoy's "love-hate" relationship with the Lord. He shared that the song passed through the test of fire, because he wrote it during with one of the trying moments in his life.

GONZALES. Almost gave up his vocation.

In 1989, JBoy had just entered the Society of Jesus, when he learned about his father's illness. Being very close to his family, he was so affected that he almost gave up his vocation. When his father finally died, he confessed saying, *"Hindi ko alam kung tama ang ginagawa ko."* He was, referring to his stay in the seminary while his family was suffering because of his father's death.

Good father

He told his mother that he was willing to leave the seminary, but to his surprise, his mother said, "Go on with what you want. If God helped us when you were gone, the Lord will also be a good father to us."

This opened JBoy's heart. Although he was so frigthened to go on with his chosen life, he could not deny that the Lord had indeed been faithful to him and his family. In "Panunumpa," this young man's soul, who was yearning for assurance, found his voice and said: *"Ikaw lamang ang pangakong mahalin..."*

He said, 'Panunumpa' speaks of a two-way relationship. *Isinumpa ko ang sarili ko sa Diyos*, but the Lord has first committed himself to me."

JBoy was quick to emphasize that his loving relationship with the Lord as depicted in the song was not his alone. He found a model in his mother, Luz Marfil Gonzales.

Model

He said, "My mother is also one of my inspirations in the song. She is my model of commitment. When she married my father, she committed herself to the Lord and to her husband. She is the light that has led me to that faith."

Indeed, "Panunumpa," more than a romantic overture, is a song of soul's loving relationship to the Lord. It is a promise that, with all that we can love around us, the Lord should always be number one.

Winemaker

But it took years before JBoy could finish the song. He likened his experience of writing "Panunumpa" to that of a wine maker who finds joy in aging wine.

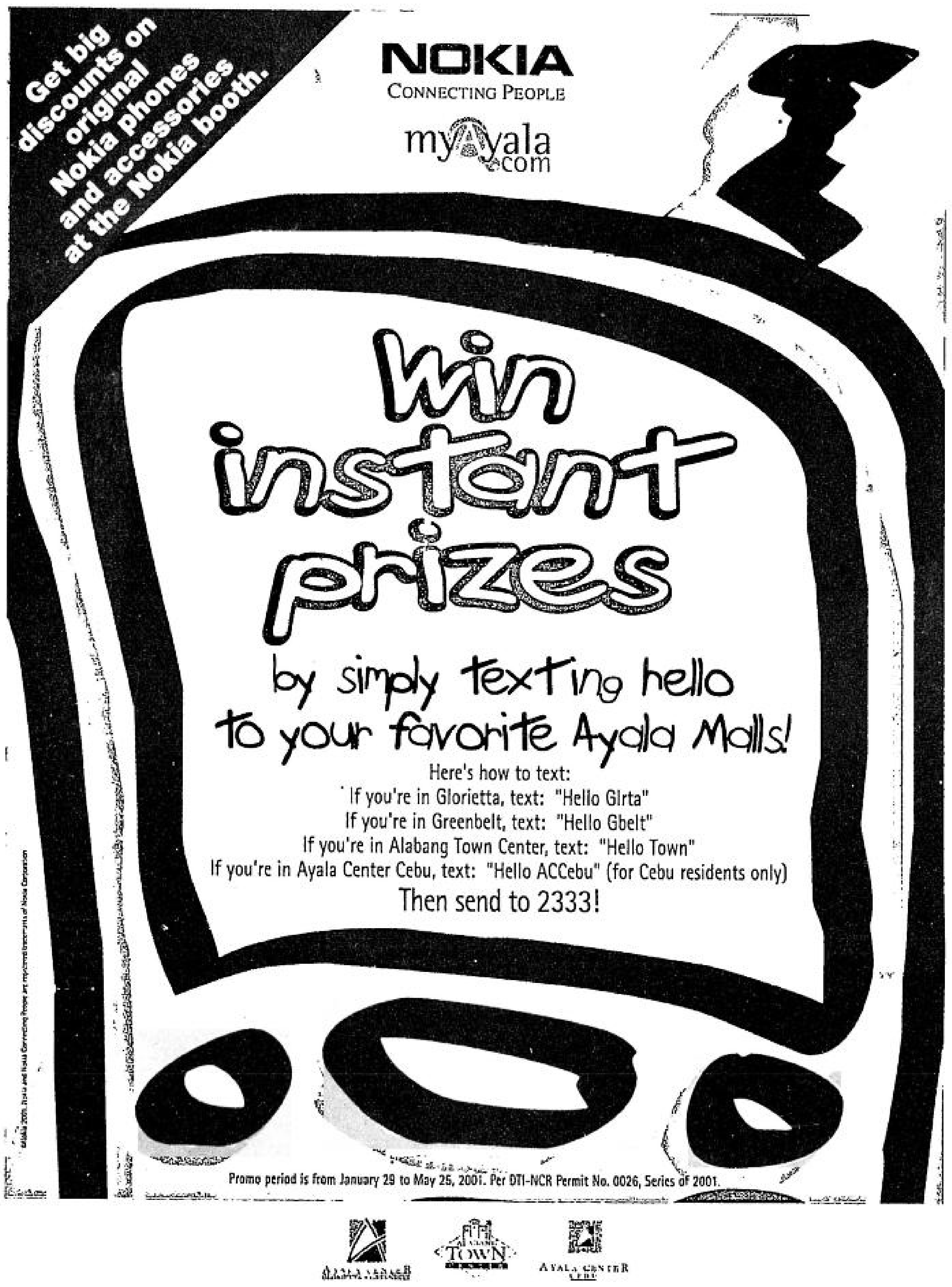
Originally, "Panunumpa" was arranged by Paul Tirol and sung by Margie Templo for the Jesuit Music Ministry. But when Star Cinema used it for Guillen's film, "Panunumpa" was re-arranged for Star Records by Alvin Nuñez and was performed by Carol Banawa.

JBoy Gonzales can be considered a neophyte compared to two of the big names in the Jesuit music ministry - Fr. Eddie Hontiveros, SJ and Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ. He shared, however, that these two Jesuit masters of music inspired him to enter the Society of Jesus. He said that he had heard their music and wanted to do the same in his own life - make people realize the love of God through music.

The song depicts the composer's 'love-hate' relationship with the Lord

On April 15, Rev. JBoy Gonzales will finally be ordained priest of the Society of Jesus. During communion, "Panunumpa" will take center stage as the choir will sing it while future Fr. JBoy shares the body and blood of our Lord with his loved ones.

And as he enters the life of a priest, we pray with him, using his favorite lines: *"Ikaw ang siyang pag-ibig ko, asahan mo ang katapatan ko. Kahit ang puso ko'y nalulumbay, mananatiling ikaw pa rin!"*



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Deglamorizing Klaudia Koronel

BY REMY M. UMEREZ

KLAUDIA Koronel's films are being shown one after another, so the fear is that the moviegoing public may soon tire of seeing her on the giant screen.

KORONEL. No attitude problem on the set.

Supervising director Joey Gosengfiao disagrees: "If they were to tire of seeing her nakedness, *dapat noon pa*. Klaudia is the most in-demand bold star at present. She stands a better chance of staying longer in the business because her projects are well conceptualized."

Director Jeffrey Jeturian personally chose Klaudia to play the actress who portrays the incest victim in "Tuhog."

Desire

"I like working with Klaudia. She listens well to my instructions. I sense in her the desire to learn more about acting. There's more to Klaudia than her physical attributes." Another controversial movie, "Live Show" by Jose Javier Reyes, shows how bold Klaudia can go. *"Kikay na pokpok"* is how Joey describes the role of Klaudia in the film.

Both the story and screenplay were written by Joey. "She is a comic relief because we retained Klaudia's Visayan accent. Her dream was to become an entertainer in Japan but she was fooled by illegal recruiters. She becomes a live sex performer instead," he says.

Joey observes that Klaudia is determined to improve herself both as a person and artist. "Another plus factor working to her advantage is that she has no attitude problem on the set. To my knowledge, Klaudia is very professional," he confirms.

As proof of how well-rounded performer Klaudia is, the bosomy actress reacquaints herself with the sex-horror genre as she co-stars with new Regal actor Carlos Morales in "Babaeng Putik."

Second time

This is her second time working with Rico Ma. Ilarde, who directed her in "Dugo ng Birhen."

Klaudia's role is not to be envied because she is totally deglamorized everytime she transforms herself into a monster who hatches from a strange fruit.

"Babaeng Putik" has outstanding special effects, which were done at Roadrunner. Rico is proud that he achieved a quality horror movie despite the limited budget given to him by Regal.

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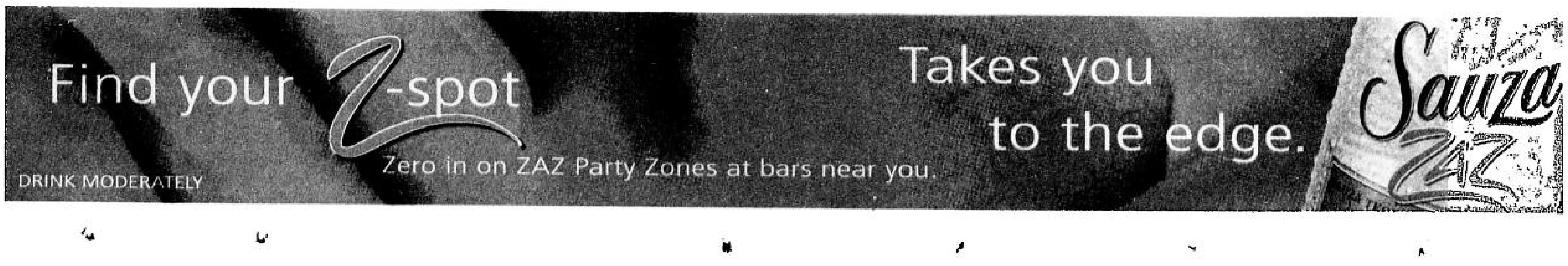

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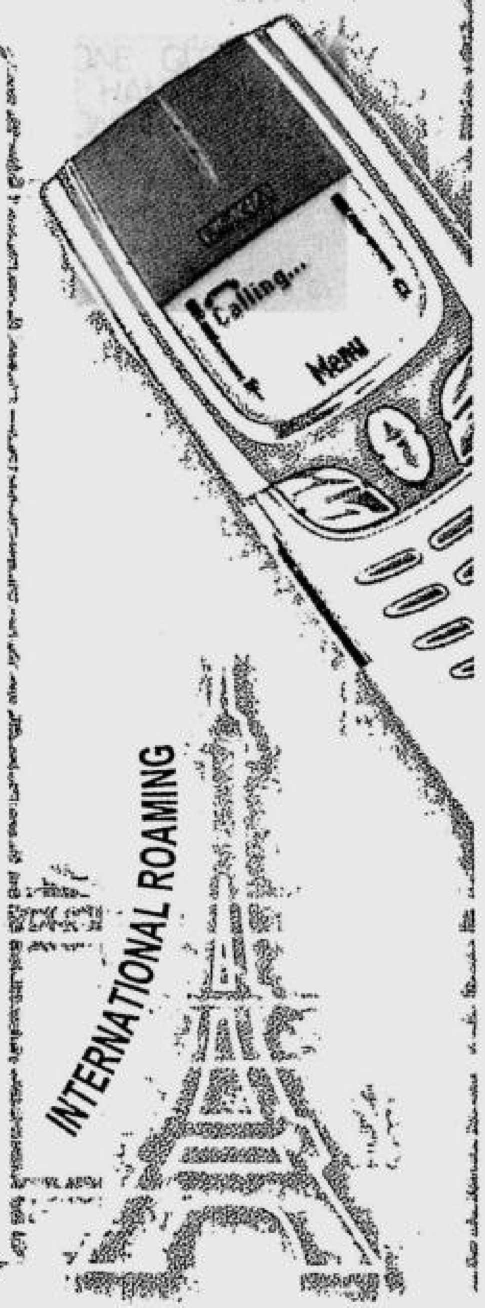


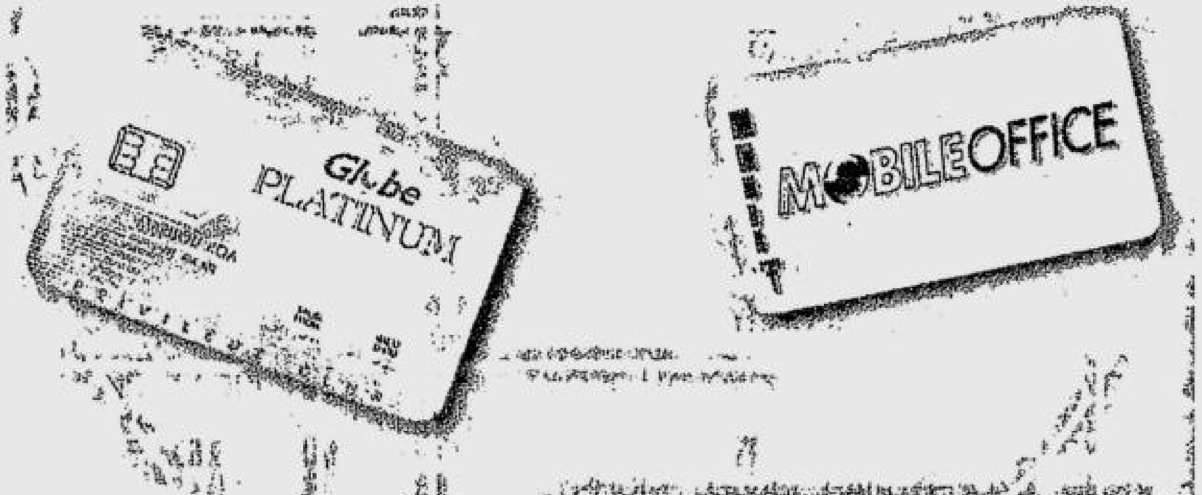
They thrive on building businesses that compete internationally. And they expect no less but the best from the choices they make. "We were disgruntled analogue subscribers. So when Globe launched the GSM technology, although we didn't know what that really means, we applied for the highest subscription plan right away," Johnlu reveals.

In fact, the couple belongs to the pioneer batch of international roamers. "That time, calling Manila with my cellphone when out of the country made me feel like a world-class business person," he adds. "And once, I had to use the hotel's business service to fax the office some memos while in Paris. Imagine, the cost was equivalent to an overnight stay!" Marilou adds. Now, they can do this through their Globe Handyphone. Thus, knowing they can do more than just make calls afforded them a sense of wellness.

With over a hundred international roaming destinations around the world, the Koas are always within reach as they travel, which they do several times a year. "We get to watch over the kids and close the best transactions while away from home and office," Johnlu attests.

Aside from having their unique technological needs met, the Koas are afforded preferential treatment as Globe Platinum Cardholders. "I have a spare SIM in my wallet, which I keep with my credit cards. So no matter what happens to my phone, I won't be totally lost," enthuses Marilou.

"Our past experiences with Globe and all the technology it introduced makes us confident that if there's anything new, Globe Handyphone will adopt it for all its subscribers," she concludes.



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'I'm a real sweetie,' insists Jack Nicholson

LONDON—Hollywood star Jack Nicholson says he is a "real sweetie"—despite a reputation as a hellraiser and his long career playing a succession of disturbed movie characters.

Misconception

"The biggest misconception about me is that I'm angry and/or violent," Nicholson, 63, told Britain's Daily Express newspaper in an interview published on Monday.

"But in reality I'm a real pussy of a guy, a real sweetie."

Nicholson, who won an Oscar for his portrayal of an obsessive homophobic writer in "As Good As It Gets," is set for a return to the silver screen in the thriller "The Pledge," in which he plays a small town policeman on the verge of retirement who pledges to find the killer of a little girl.

The movie also features an impressive supporting cast, including Mickey Rourke and British actresses Helen Mirren and Vanessa Redgrave.

"Every day I'd come in and there was another of these great actors to work with," he told the Express.

More picky

The star of such memorable movies as "Terms of Endearment," "The Shining" and "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest" said he had started to take life easier, becoming more picky about movie projects.

"This is the third time I have taken a year off, which means I refuse to read scripts or talk about movies," he said.

"I kind of refilled the tub. I know it's a shock to some actors but there is life outside the movies."

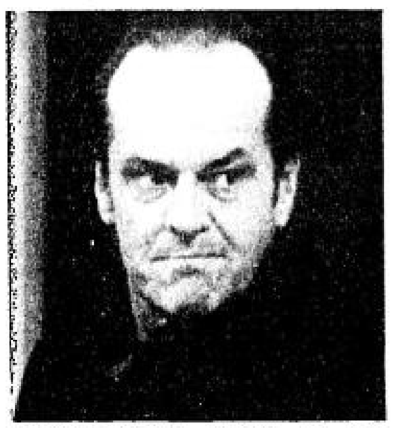
The three-times Oscar winner said: "I socialised, I travelled a bit. I read for pleasure. I lived my life."

Veteran

Despite slowing down, the Hollywood veteran—who shot to fame alongside Dennis Hopper in the low-budget movie classic "Easy Rider"—told the Daily Express he had no plans to retire.

"I talked to Clint (Eastwood) a couple of years ago about us both retiring. Then I ran into him this month and he said: 'I see neither of us has retired yet.' We just keep ploughing on."

Reuters



NICHOLSON. There is life outside the movies.

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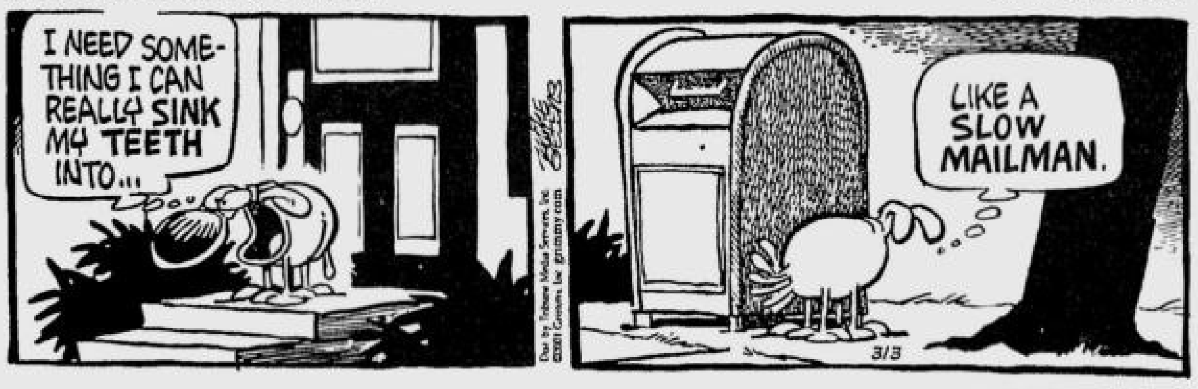
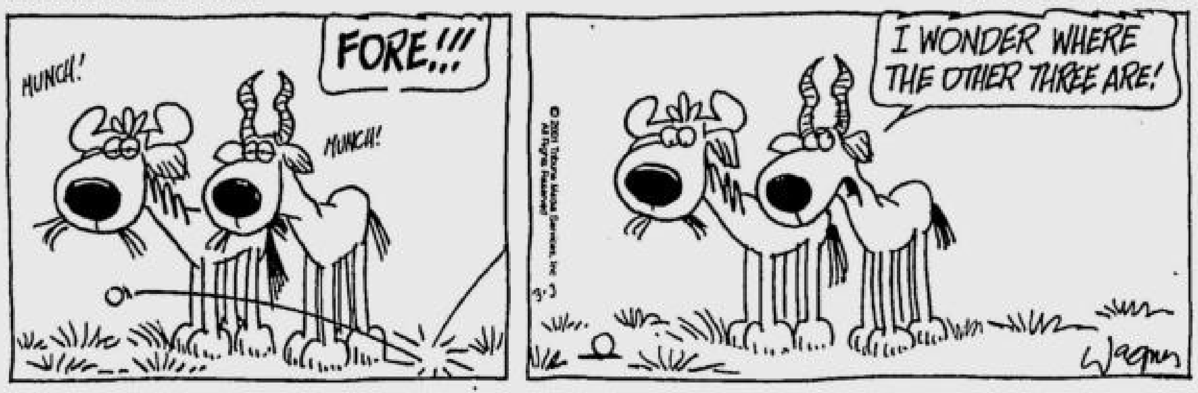
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I NEED SOME-THING I CAN REALLY SINK MY TEETH INTO...
LIKE A SLOW MAILMAN.
3/3

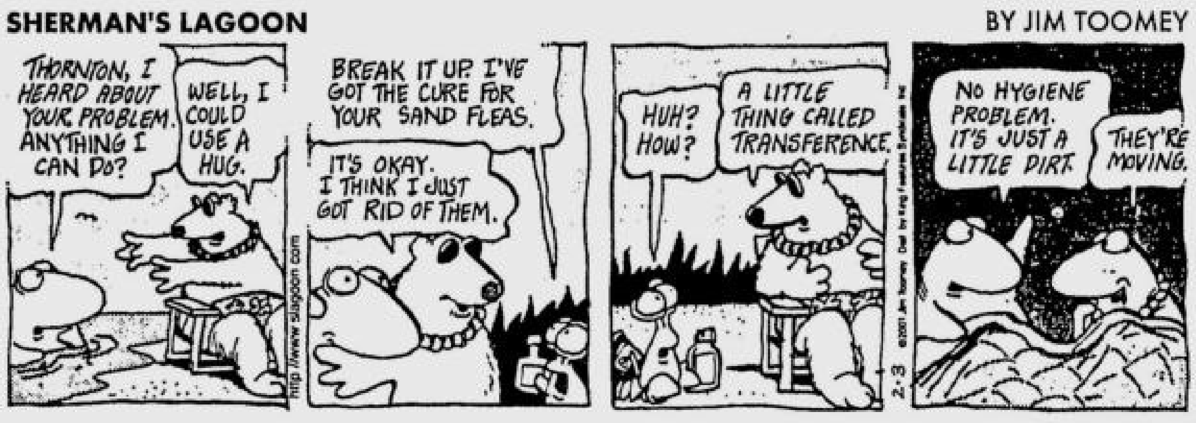
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


MUNCH!
MUNCH!
FORE!!!
I WONDER WHERE THE OTHER THREE ARE!
3-3
Wagner

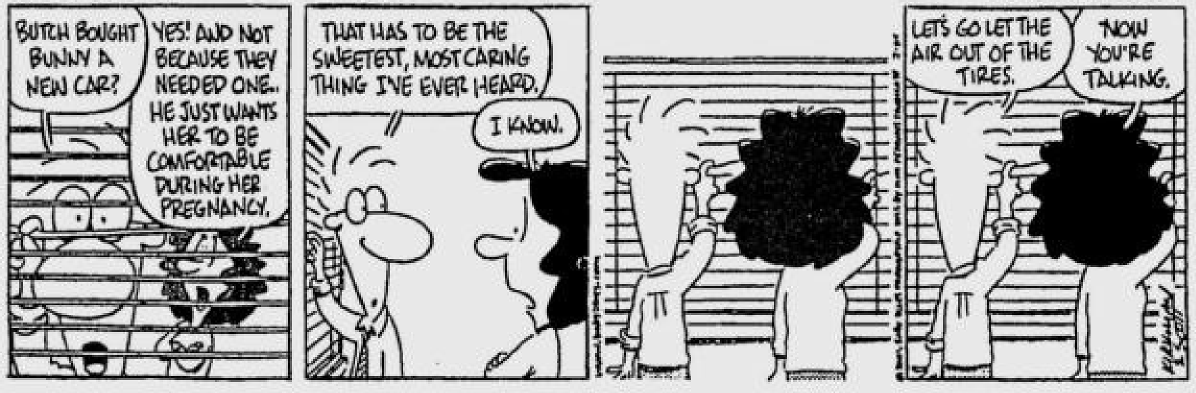
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


THORNTON, I HEARD ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM. ANYTHING I CAN DO?
WELL, I COULD USE A HUG.
BREAK IT UP. I'VE GOT THE CURE FOR YOUR SAND FLEAS.
IT'S OKAY. I THINK I JUST GOT RID OF THEM.
HUH? HOW?
A LITTLE THING CALLED TRANSFERENCE.
NO HYGIENE PROBLEM. IT'S JUST A LITTLE DIRT.
THEY'RE MOVING.
http://www.slagoon.com
2-3

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BUTCH BOUGHT BUNNY A NEW CAR?
YES! AND NOT BECAUSE THEY NEEDED ONE.. HE JUST WANTS HER TO BE COMFORTABLE DURING HER PREGNANCY.
THAT HAS TO BE THE SWEETEST, MOST CARING THING I'VE EVER HEARD.
I KNOW.
LET'S GO LET THE AIR OUT OF THE TIRES.
NOW YOU'RE TALKING.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mia Hamm, Rob Lowe, Kurt Russell, Patrick Duffy, Nat King Cole, Gary Sinise, Rob Lowe

Happy Birthday: It is wise to be the quiet observer until you are 100-percent sure of your next move. You should focus on goals that require your individual attention if you really want to make some headway. Your year can be prosperous, but only if you are conservative in your investments and refrain from overextending yourself to bankroll a bad idea. Your numbers: 15, 23, 26, 31, 35, 43

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Listen to advice from those with more experience. You will have problems with your partner if you aren't willing to compromise. Look into making professional changes.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Use your own initiative. Waiting for others will be a waste of time. You will gain the most if you travel. Don't get entangled with associates trying to make a fast buck.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You can make financial gains if you develop one of your unique ideas. Talk to those who might contribute to your efforts. You need to present your work if you want to prosper.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Changes at work may set you off, causing upset on the home front if you aren't careful. You mustn't dwell on situations that don't involve your loved ones.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Rumor has it that you are up for a promotion if you push yourself just a little harder. You need to show your worth and mingle with those in a position to help you get ahead.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can expect to make a few changes in your daily routine. It's time to get involved in some of the groups that you're interested in. Don't be a follower; go after your own goals.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be careful; you're accident-prone today. You must make sure that you concentrate on what you are doing. Your colleagues may cause frustration if they appear to be working against you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Talk to a good friend you can trust. You need to bounce ideas off someone who will give you an honest opinion. You need to make changes if you want to be happy. Don't be afraid to say no to someone you don't love anymore.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Push your ideas at work. You'll be surprised at the positive response. You need to believe in yourself and your work if you want others to.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Try not to be too harsh with your lover. Your motives may not be all that ethical. Get back to values and try to sort out your differences.

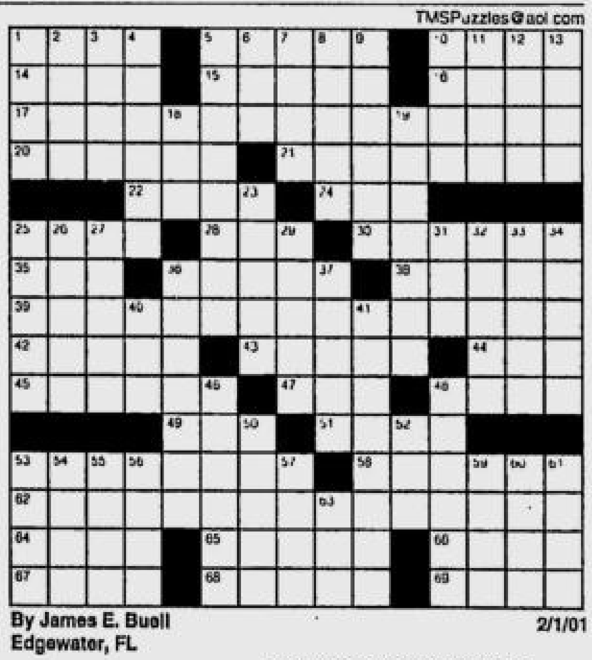
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take part in an event that you feel is for a good cause. Your ability to help others won't go unnoticed. You can move into an interesting relationship if you are receptive to someone's advances.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You should take part in social events sponsored by people in your industry. You need to get to know more people who can help you achieve your goals.

Birthday Baby: You can be totally unpredictable, but you also have a practical twist that helps you land on your feet. You are caring, intuitive and always into something different.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL

2/1/01

ACROSS
1 Computer input
5 Shoots the breeze
10 Break of day
14 Close to closed
15 Object from antiquity
16 Hodgepodge
17 Percussive blasts
20 Lauds
21 Plan of attack
22 Watches the kids
24 Stitch
25 Bouquet
28 __ and outs
30 Tie in
35 Ready when you __!
36 Nautical distances
38 Prescribed amounts
39 Storm blasts
42 Tribe on the move
43 Sleep soundly?
44 Epoch
45 Garland for the head
47 As well
48 Command to Fido
49 Brew house
51 London subway
53 Peacemaker
58 Net minder
62 Stadium blasts
64 Dynamic starter?
65 "The Waste Land" penner
66 Swelled-heads
67 Bread grains
68 Advances
69 Childhood taboo

DOWN
1 Roy's partner
2 Comet competition
3 Small pie
4 Large merchant ship
5 Forming whitecaps
6 Magic spell
7 Chalet locale
8 Pinball jars
9 Olympics official
10 Get something done
11 Lotion additive
12 Annex
13 Snoopy
18 Whitney known for his gin
19 Serration
23 "The __ of Kilimanjaro"
25 Turkish title
26 "Prick Up Your Ears" subject
27 Spanish missionary Junipero
29 Job duration
31 Bodybuilder Ferrigno
32 Selling point
33 Colorful tropical fish
34 Test composition
36 Patella protector
37 Schnoz
40 Quirky
41 Dry spells
46 Clam cousin
48 Mariners
50 Charming miss
52 Bronx cheer
53 Gelling agent
54 Quarry
55 Whittle
56 Son of Seth
57 Macy's Parade spoiler
59 Building block
60 Golf club
61 Exxon, formerly
63 Up-to-date, for short

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	A	G	A	■	A	W	A	R	D	■	S	E	R	B
O	W	L	S	■	C	A	C	A	O	■	C	R	E	E
L	E	A	P	A	T	T	H	E	C	H	A	N	C	E
O	D	D	■	J	O	E	Y	■	■	E	L	I	O	T
■	■	■	P	A	R	R	■	S	P	L	E	E	N	S
H	O	M	E	R	S	■	S	H	O	E	S	■	■	■
A	L	A	S	■	■	S	C	I	O	N	■	E	E	L
F	L	Y	O	F	F	T	H	E	H	A	N	D	L	E
T	A	O	■	R	O	A	M	S	■	■	O	G	L	E
■	■	■	C	U	R	I	O	■	O	B	S	E	S	S
R	E	F	U	T	E	D	■	B	R	A	Y	■	■	■
A	D	E	P	T	■	■	P	U	P	S	■	A	R	M
J	U	M	P	I	N	T	O	T	H	E	F	R	A	Y
A	C	M	E	■	A	O	R	T	A	■	R	I	F	T
S	E	E	D	■	T	O	K	E	N	■	O	A	T	H

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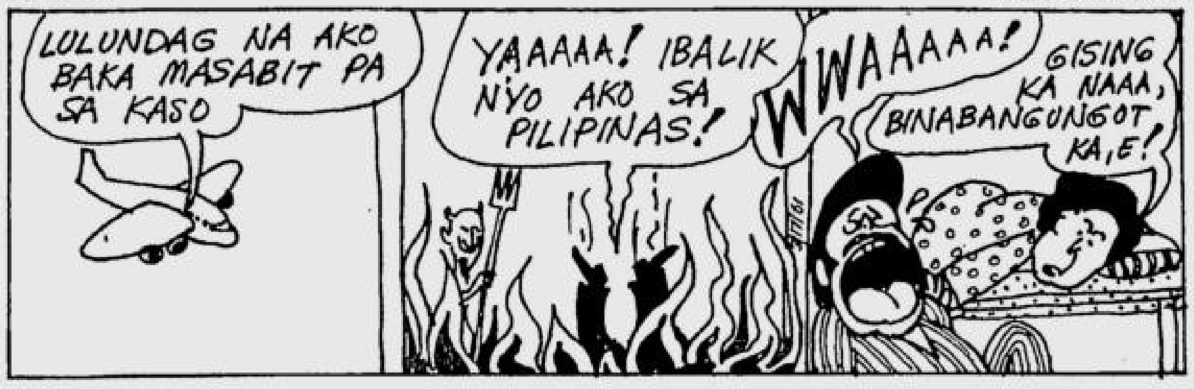
2/1/01

ANSWER ON MONDAY

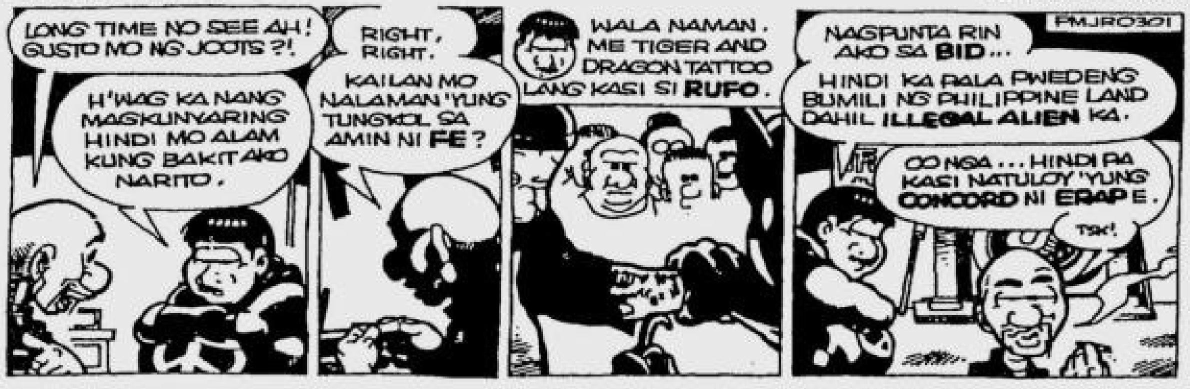
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


LULUNDAG NA AKO BAKA MASABIT PA SA KASO
YAAAAA! IBALIK N'YO AKO SA PILIPINAS!
WWAAAAAA!
GISING KA NAAA, BINABANGUNGOT KA, E!

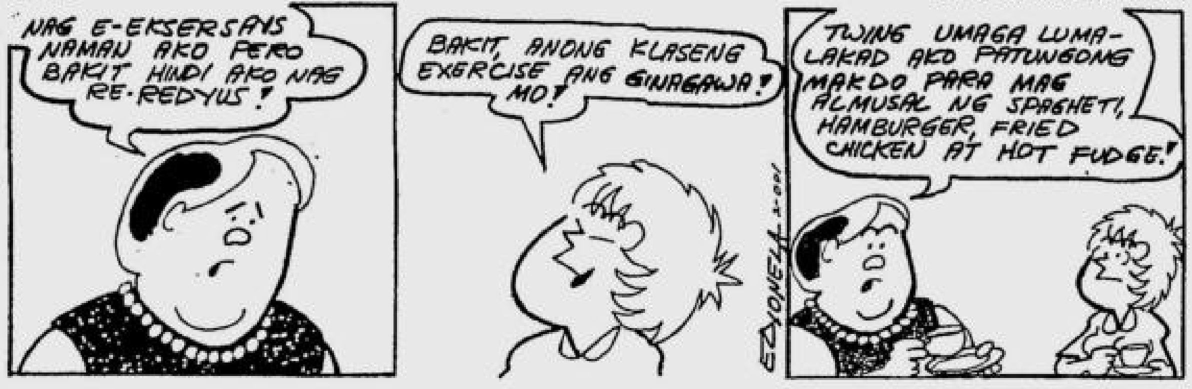
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


LONG TIME NO SEE AH! GUSTO MO NG JOOTS ?!.
H'WAG KA NANG MAGKUNYARING HINDI MO ALAM KUNG BAKIT AKO NARITO.
RIGHT, RIGHT.
KAILAN MO NALAMAN 'YUNG TUNGKOL SA AMIN NI FE?
WALA NAMAN. ME TIGER AND DRAGON TATTOO LANG KASI SI RUFO.
PMJRO301
NAGPUNTA RIN AKO SA BID...
HINDI KA PALA PWEDENG BUMILI NG PHILIPPINE LAND DAHIL ILLEGAL ALIEN KA.
OO NGA... HINDI PA KASI NATULOY 'YUNG CONCORD NI ERAP E.
TSK!

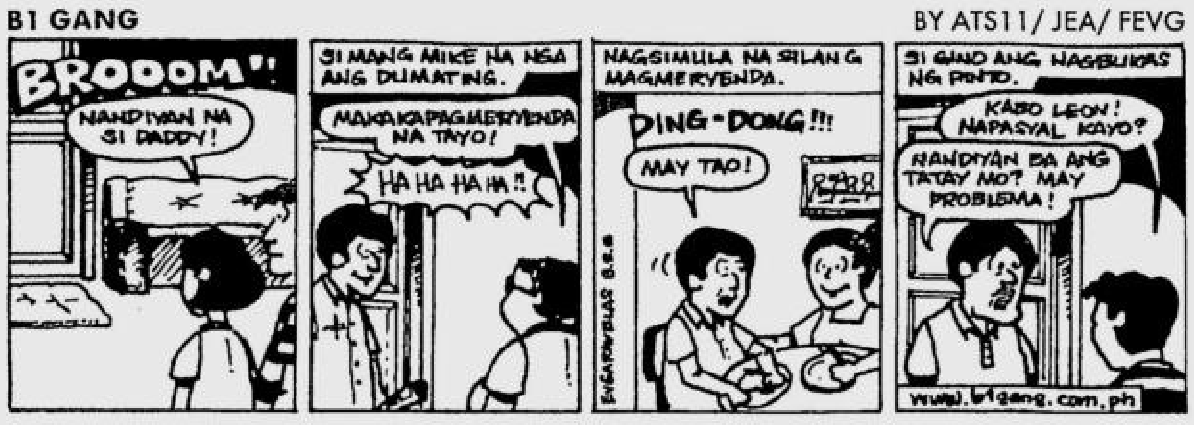
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


NAG E-EKSERSAYS NAMAN AKO PERO BAKIT HINDI AKO NAG RE-REDYUS!
BAKIT, ANONG KLASENG EXERCISE ANG GINAGAWA MO?
TWING UMAGA LUMALAKAD AKO PATUNGONG MAKDO PARA MAG ALMUSAL NG SPAGHETI, HAMBURGER, FRIED CHICKEN AT HOT FUDGE!
EDIONELA

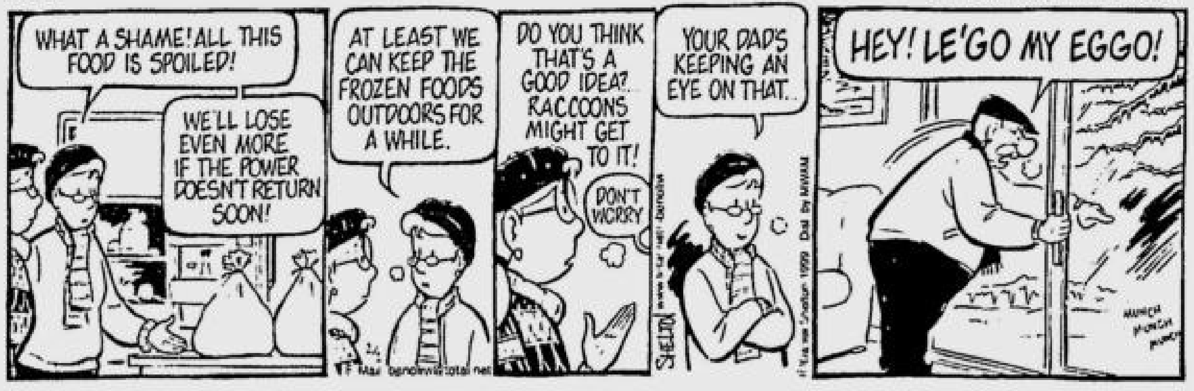
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


BROOOM!!
NANDIYAN NA SI DADDY!
SI MANG MIKE NA NGA ANG DUMATING.
MAKAKAPAGMERYENDA NA TAYO!
HA HA HA HA!!
NAGSIMULA NA SILANG MAGMERYENDA.
DING-DONG!!!
MAY TAO!
SI GINO ANG NAGBUKAS NG PINTO.
KABO LEON! NAPASYAL KAYO?
NANDIYAN BA ANG TATAY MO? MAY PROBLEMA!
www.b1gang.com.ph

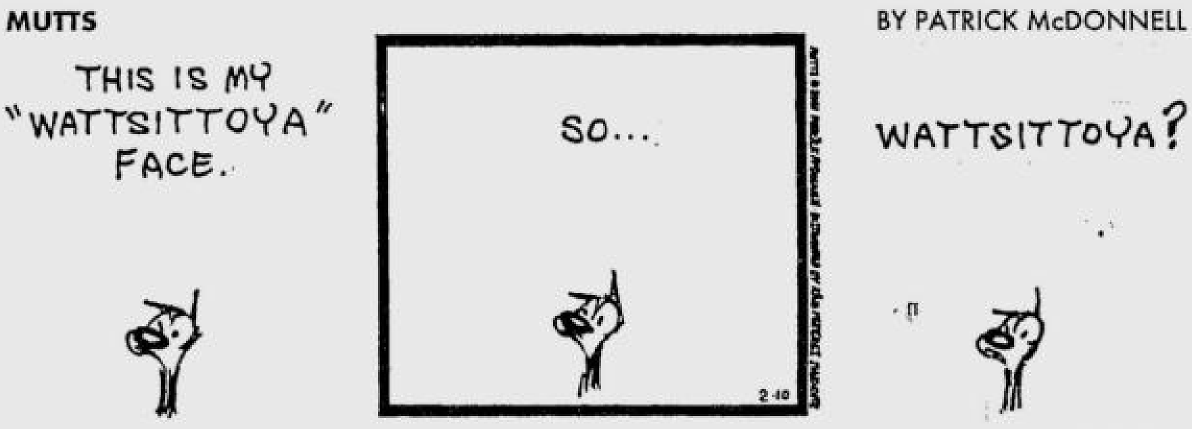
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT A SHAME! ALL THIS FOOD IS SPOILED!
WE'LL LOSE EVEN MORE IF THE POWER DOESN'T RETURN SOON!
AT LEAST WE CAN KEEP THE FROZEN FOODS OUTDOORS FOR A WHILE.
DO YOU THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA? RACCOONS MIGHT GET TO IT!
DON'T WORRY
YOUR DAD'S KEEPING AN EYE ON THAT.
HEY! LE'GO MY EGGO!
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
SHELTON

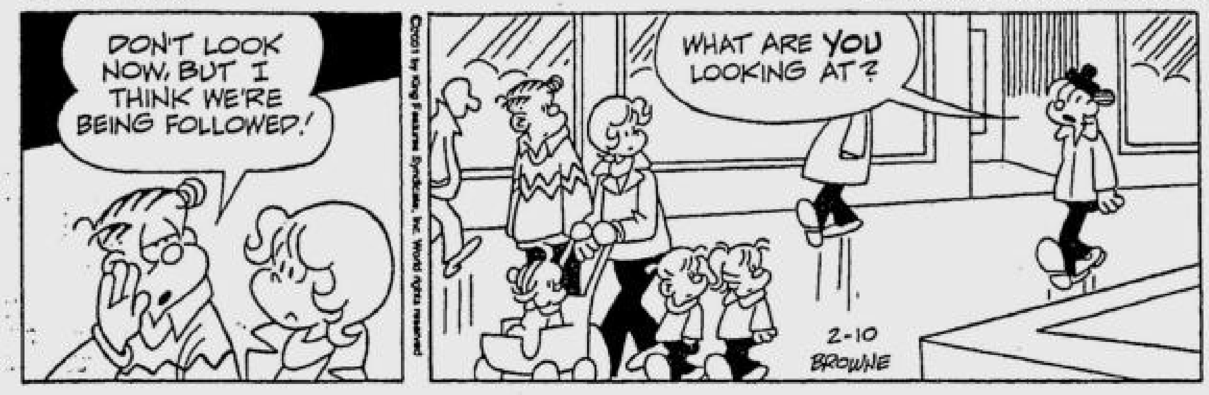
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS MY "WATTSITTOYA" FACE.
SO...
WATTSITTOYA?
2-10

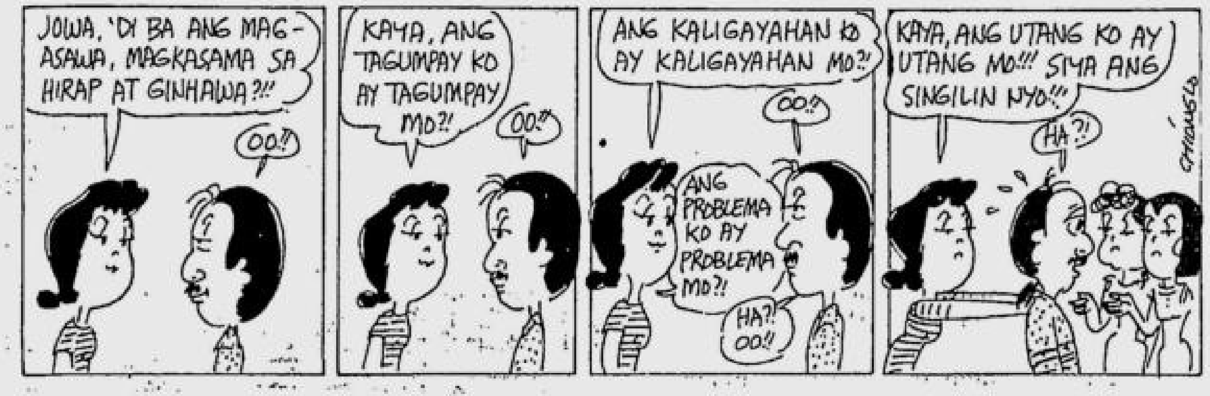
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT I THINK WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
2-10
BROWNE

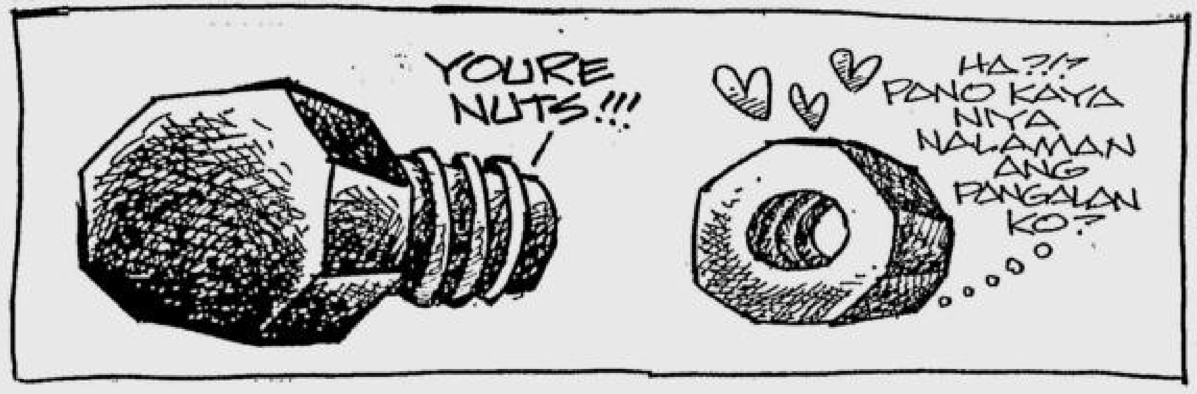
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, 'DI BA ANG MAG-ASAWA, MAGKASAMA SA HIRAP AT GINHAWA?!!
OO!?
KAYA, ANG TAGUMPAY KO AY TAGUMPAY MO?!
OO!?
ANG KALIGAYAHAN KO AY KALIGAYAHAN MO?!
OO!?
ANG PROBLEMA KO AY PROBLEMA MO?!
HA?! OO!!
KAYA, ANG UTANG KO AY UTANG MO!!! SIYA ANG SINGILIN NYO!!!
HA?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK NI TITO

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


YOURE NUTS!!!
HA?!? PANO KAYA NIYA NALAMAN ANG PANGALAN KO?

'Bait' is a clever action-thriller with an attitude

By Roger Ebert

"BAIT" is a deadpan action comedy with a little Hitchcock, a little Bond—and a lot of attitude! It's funny and clever, and it grows on you, especially with the tension between Jamie Foxx's trash-talking thief and David Morse's monomaniacal federal agent.

Gambit

It's one of those movies where you start out thinking you've seen it all before, and the longer it runs, the less you've seen before. There's even an effective use of the exhausted old Red Digital Readout gambit.

The movie opens with the high-tech robbery of $42 million in gold bullion from the Federal Reserve m New York. Two guards are executed. The mastermind is Bristol (Doug Hutchison), a genius computer hacker but a poor judge of men, who unwisely entrusts the getaway truck to a slob partner who drives off without him. The feds nab the partner, and he's interrogated by the hard-boiled U.S. Treasury agent Clenteen (David Morse). The guy keeps asking for a doctor, but Clenteen doesn't get the message until another agent (David Paymer) comments, "I don't think he's kidding."

The getaway driver is dead. That leaves both the feds and the hacker desperate to find out where the gold is hidden. One man may know: Alvin Sanders (Jamie Foxx) shared the same prison cell with the dead man and may have learned something. Clenteen devises a diabolical scheme. He will implant Alvin with a miniature audio and tracking chip, allowing agents to eavesdrop on every word and follow every move. He'll be bait to lure Bristol--and then the feds will pounce.

More complicated

This is all setup for a movie that is funny in an oblique, underplayed sort of way. It's kidding itself but doesn't always admit it. It doesn't go for obvious laughs, like a Martin Lawrence movie might have, but uses Foxx's wisecracking ad-lib style to create Alvin as a character who gets more complicated the more time we spend with him. In his opening scenes, as Alvin bungles the theft of a shipment of prawns, I was writing "condescending" in my notes: He was coming across as a broad urban stereotype,-not too smart. Then it became clear that Alvin uses his persona as a shield, a weapon of humor to protect and deflect. By the end of the movie, when he sets up his own sting to find out who's following him, we're not surprised.

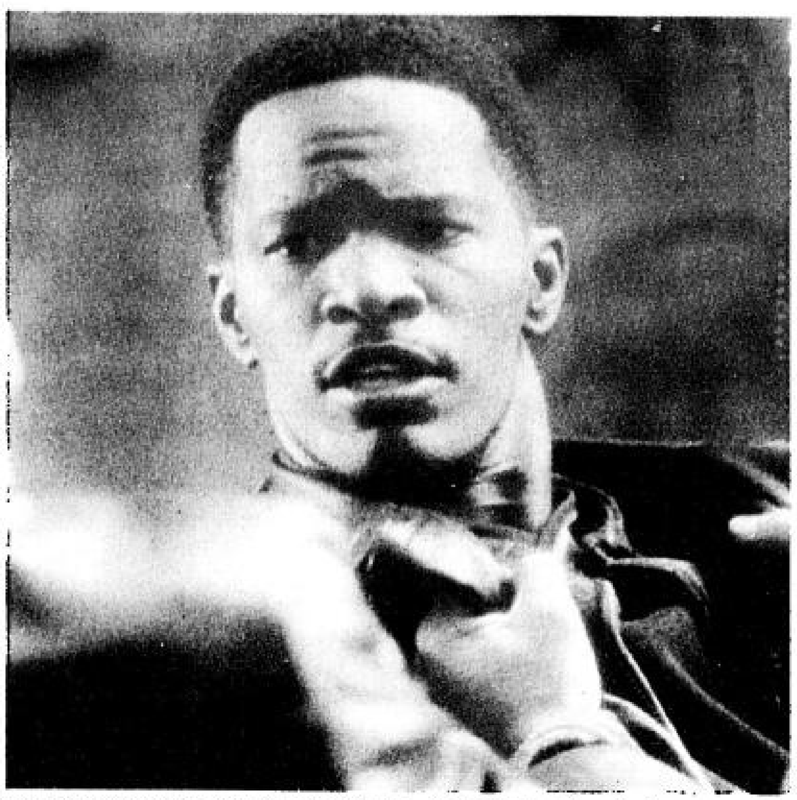
A lot of the best scenes involve federal agents in a monitoring post, eavesdropping on Alvin's life, his conversations, his problems with his girlfriend (Kimberly Elise) and the trouble his brother (Mike Epps) gets him in. This isn't reality TV but reality radio; the agents start to like Alvin--all except for the hard-edged Cleeteen, who was born without a sense of humor. Alvin's brother involves him in a stolen car scam, and the feds panic that their bait will be back in jail before he can catch the fish. They try to control his life without letting him know they exist, arranging for him to come into money--in scenes that Foxx milks for all they're worth.

Bizarre scheme

Hutchison, as Bristol, the computer genius and killer thief, does an effective John Malkovich number. He's calm until he shrieks; calculated until he cracks; all business until he gets involved in a bizarre scheme involving kidnapping, bombs, torture and a racetrack sequence that owes more than a little to Hitchcock (and something to the Marx Brothers "A Day at the Races").

Just recently, in my review of "The Watcher," I was complaining about killers who spend more time devising elaborate booby-traps for the cops than in committing their crimes. Now I forgive Bristol for the same practice. It's all in how you do it--in the style. And while Keanu Reeves' killer in "The Watcher" seems interested only in playing mind games with James Spader's FBI man, Bristol, here, has a more realistic motivation--he wants his $42 million.

Some will argue that the climax at the racetrack is preposterous. They will be right. The secret hiding place for the gold also raises a lot of questions--like, how easy would it actually be to put it there? Those are not the kinds of questions that are relevant to a film like this. It's over the top, an exercise.in action comedy that cuts loose from logic and enjoys itself. And it's intriguing the way the Foxx character conceals his thinking even from the audience at times--how he is more than he seems, and finds it prudent to keep that fact to himself.


THE MOVIE is funny in an oblique, underplayed sort of way.

Abanse! Pinay

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

ABANSE! Pinay is a party list for women. It articulates women's views concerning issues related to women and economic progress.

Decade

Backgrounder: 1990 to 2000 was the decade that Filipinas focused on women in politics and thus, in 1997 Abanse! Pinay was formed. The commitment to this cause led to the nomination of Alice C. Morada of Davao City.

Morada comes from a family of lawyers. Her dream was put on hold until she ran into a lot of problems, mostly lawyer-caused—so, she joined them! She graduated in 1984, and in 1985, she took her oath of office—at 40 years of age!

Alice started as a research attorney and moved on to become a legal consultant. In 1990, she joined Aboitiz and Company, Cebu, where she is still Senior Associate General Counsel.

Her work with women started in Tagum, Davao Del Norte, where they started livelihood projects for wives of laborers. In Davao City, she worked for Kahayag to produce comic books to assist farmers in Bukidnon being thrown out of farms because of the corporate farming scheme initiated by the Dictator.

She joined rallies and mass actions and searched for the "*desparecidos.*" Her group at Kahayag thought nothing of going to military camps and asking officials there to produce those who were kidnapped.

Involvement

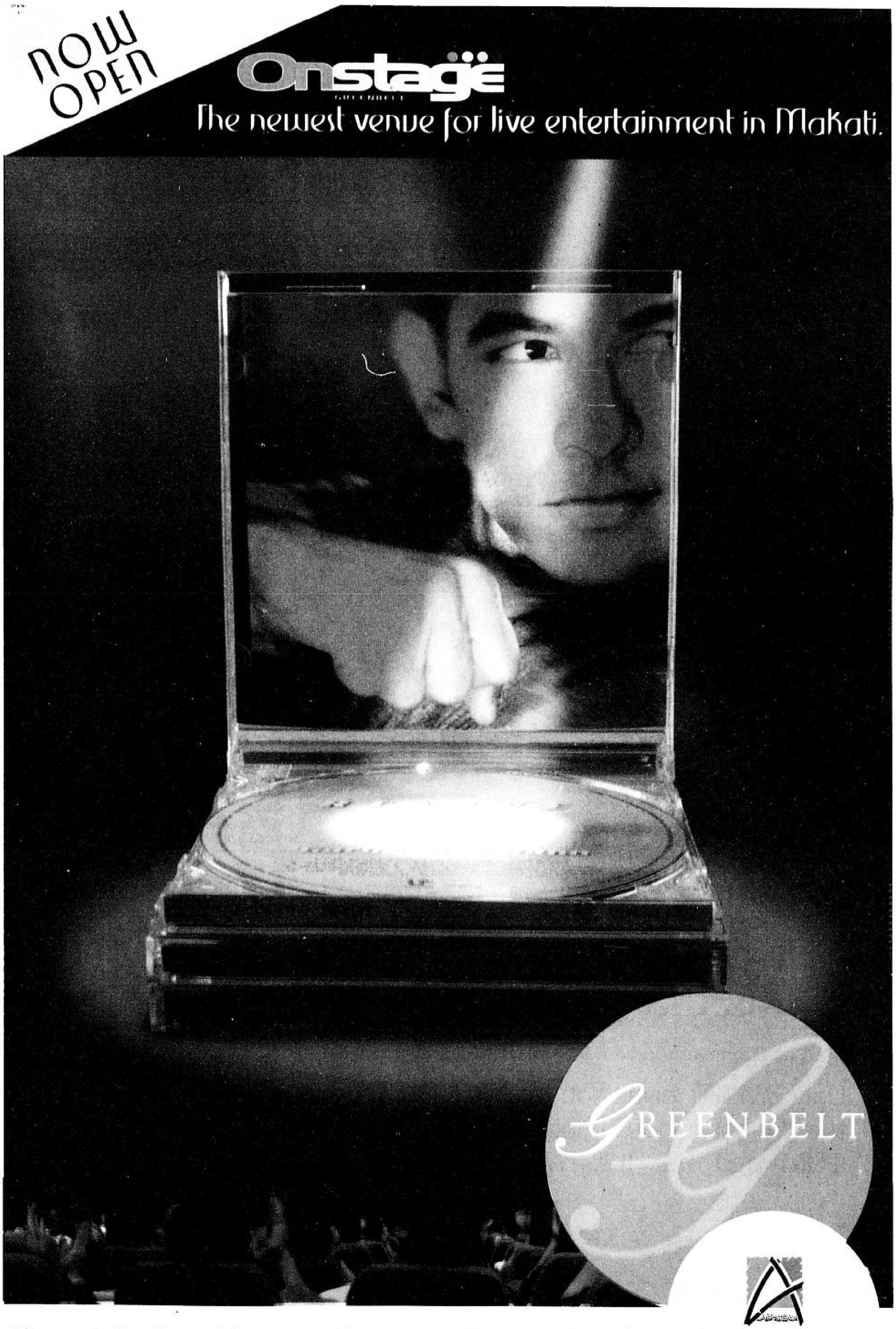
Her transfer to Cebu once again increaseed her involvement with women and children. Alice has been the chair of Lihok Pilipina Foundation, a community-based group responding to violence against women and street children, a concept now being replicated globally.

In 1997, together with Dolores Alino, she founded Law, Inc. (Legal Alternatives Center for Women, Inc.), another NGO whose main work is providing legal services to women. It has been largely instrumental for assuring compliance with the law on anti-sexual harassment. It provides legal aid to women victims of physical and sexual abuse.

For her part, Atty. Andrea Lizares of Bacolod City has seven children and placed sixth in the 1986 bar exam. Andrea obtained her Master of Divinity degree at the Asian Theological Seminary.

She is president of the Development through Acting Women Networking Foundation, Inc. (DAWN), a leader in women's rights advocacy and women's political empowerment, and heads the Bacolod chapter of Abanse! Pinay.

DAWN has trained for political participation, network of grassroots women in Negros. Her leadership was instrumental in organizing the Provincial Council for Women, the Bacolod Consortium of Women's Organizations. They also run the Women Oasis Center and WILL power (Women in Leadership and Legislation and Organization of Elected Women and Women leaders in Negros). ***(To be concluded)***



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See Mr. Pure Energy Onstage. Catch the Maxi-media production, Gary V By Request 2, on March 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31, April 6, 7, 20 and 21, at 8 pm. Tickets are available at Maxi-media, Tel. No. 813-8999.

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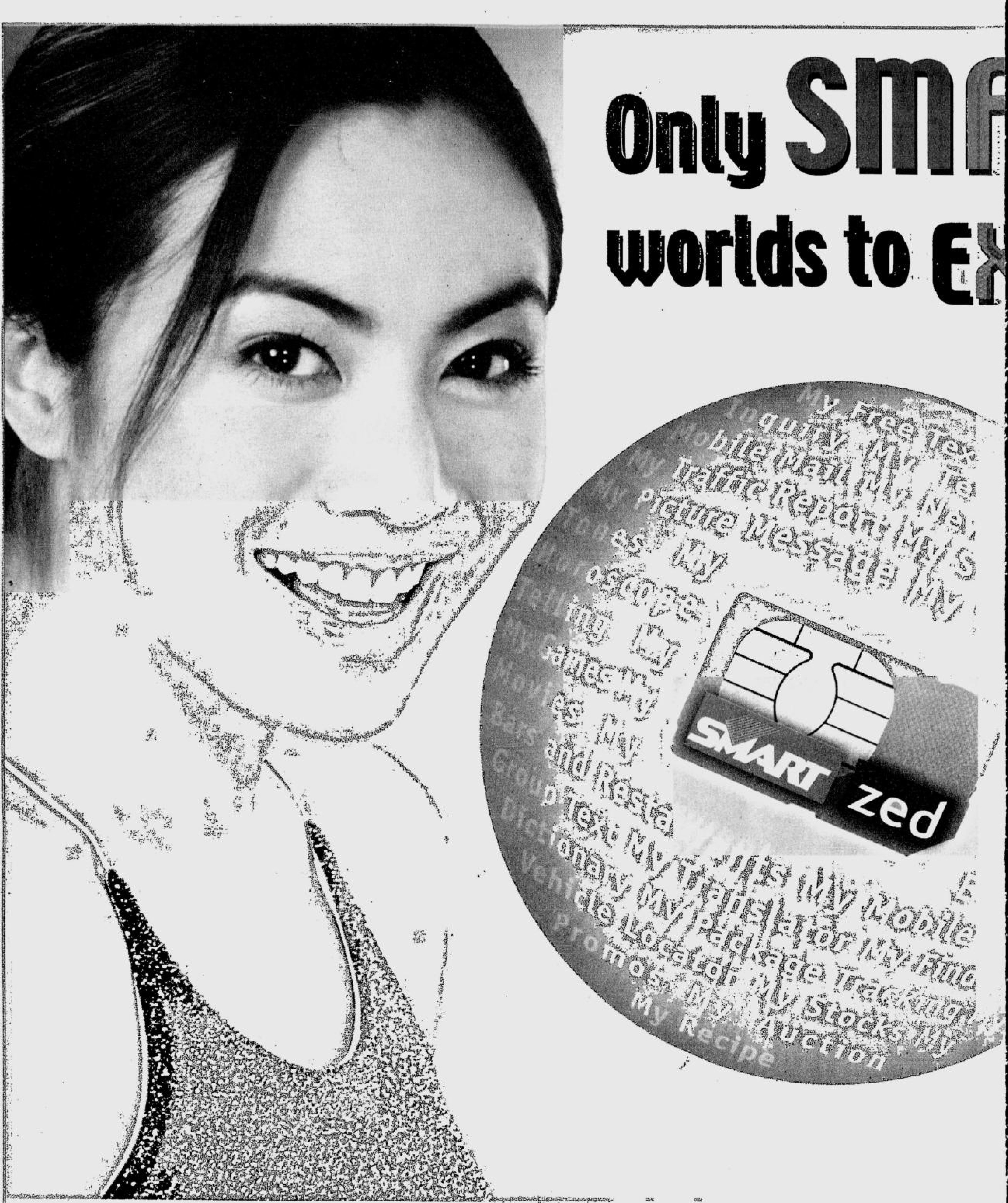
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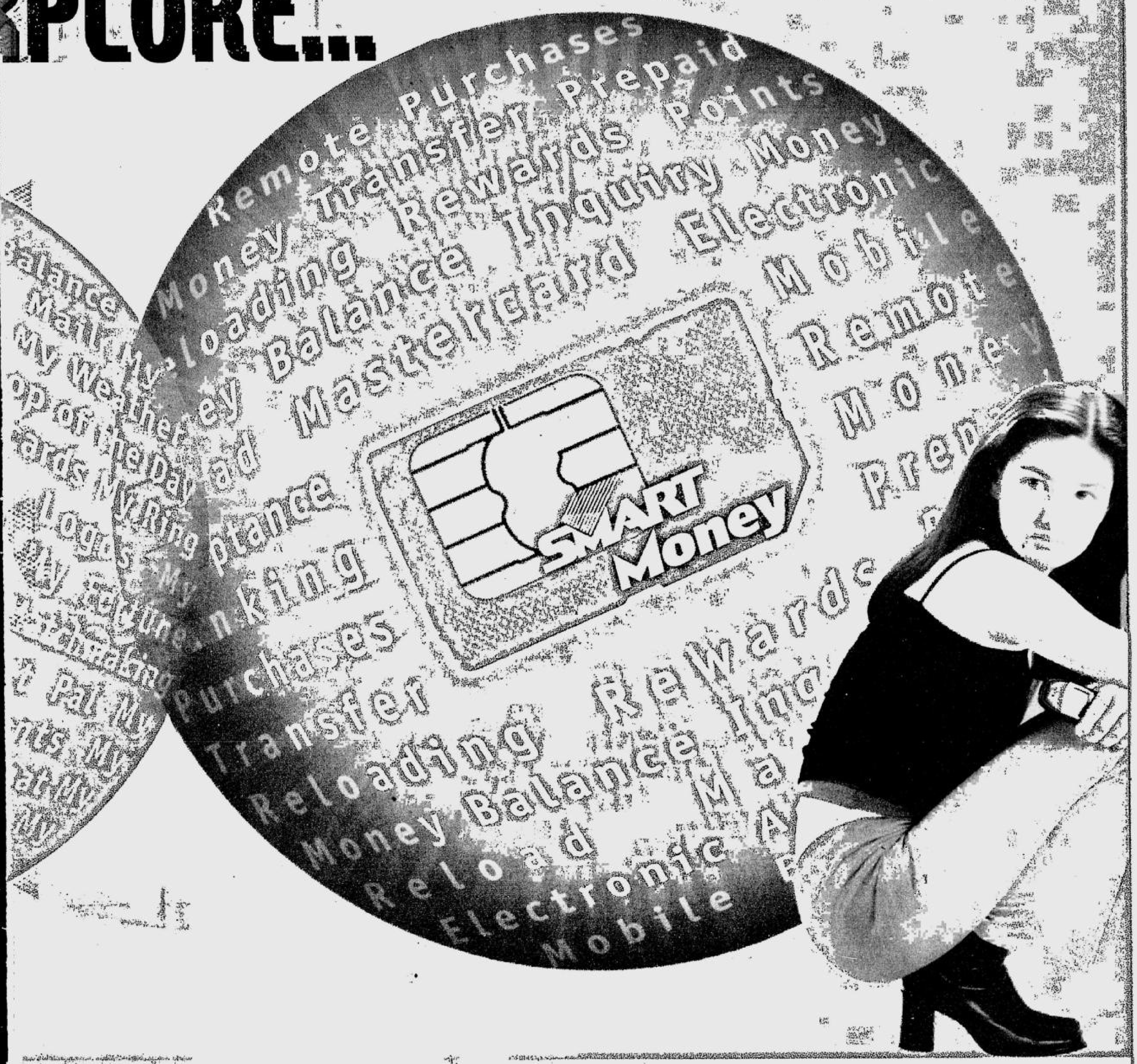
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Nora Ephron directs John Travolta in 'Lucky Numbers'

JOHN Travolta and Lisa Kudrow get mixed up in a lottery scheme in their latest movie.

IN "Lucky Numbers," local celebrity TV weatherman Russ Richards (John Travolta) is on the verge of losing his shirt. He's losing money hand over fist in an unsuccessful snowmobile dealership he owns in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Financial ruin

Desperate to avert financial ruin, Russ, together with Crystal Latroy (Lisa Kudrow), the TV station's lotto ball girl, gets mixed up in a lottery scheme. The numbers come up right, but everything else goes wrong as their plan starts to unravel and the game turns rough.

Starring John Travolta and Lisa Kudrow and directed by Nora Ephron, "Lucky Numbers" is a fictional comedy inspired by a real-life scam to win the Pennsylvania State Lottery. Also starring in the Paramount Pictures and Studiocanal presentation are Tim Roth, Ed O'Neill, Michael Rapaport and Bill Pullman.

In 1980, the Pennsylvania State Lottery was rocked by what will always be known as the "666 Fix," a scheme to fix the Daily Number drawing.

The resulting scandal, then worth a staggering $1.2 million, inspired endless speculation, editorials and, now, the fictional comedy "Lucky Numbers," which marks the first time Travolta and Ephron have worked together since the hit comedy "Michael."

Weatherman Russ Richards' slippery descent into chaos begins during one of the warmest winters in memory. With no snow in sight, sales at his snowmobile dealership are stalled and his business is about to go belly up. He turns for help to Gig, an old buddy and strip club owner played by Tim Roth.

Gig has some helpful but highly illegal suggestions, one of which requires the collusion of Crystal Latroy, the station's, sexy, avaricious lotto ball girl, played by Lisa Kudrow.

Disastrous complications

Right from the beginning, however, Russ' plans fall apart. He finds himself propelled into a variety of disastrous complications, chief among them being Dale "Dale the thug" Wagstaff, played by Michael Rapaport. Brought into the scheme by Gig, Dale turns out to be an inept but still dangerous bad guy who screws up everything he touches.

The movie also stars Ed O'Neill, who plays Dick Simmons, Russ' greedy station manager; Michael Moore as Crystal's cousin and co-conspirator, and Michael Weston who plays Larry, Russ' eager young snowmobile salesman.

Bill Pullman plays Police Lt. Pat Lakewood, a deadbeat cop reluctantly investigating the disappearance of Gig's bookie, while Daryl Mitchell is Chambers, a young, dedicated police officer unhappy to be stuck with Lakewood for a partner.

Screenwriter Adam Resnick who grew up in Harrisburg, says: "The city is pretty much known only as the site of the infamous Three Mile Island disaster, which happened many years ago, but I felt it was time that it deserved to be known for other memorable events like the infamous lottery scandal that took place in 1980."

Ephron says, "I hoped to work with John Travolta again, and when I read Adam Resnick's script, I realized this was the perfect opportunity," Travolta was also drawn to the project by the prospect of collaborating with Ephron. "When I read the script I loved it—the attraction was that I could hone the part for myself and my own comic sensibilities with Nora and Adam."

Lack of awareness

On the character of Russ Richards, Travolta says: "Russ seems guileless and unaware that he's ever full of himself. And this lack of awareness of how he's behaving or how he's being perceived makes you tend to forgive him.

"Russ and Crystal are not very bright. That's what I think is funny about them. They're both kind of—not naive or innocent—but there is a lack of savvy in each of them that is quite hilarious."

Russ Richards is one of the most appealing and unique characters to emerge on film in a long time. Anyone familiar with Travolta's filmography will note that he likes to bring a comedic aspect to even the most dramatic characters he's played.

"I think it's much more interesting to watch. And even in 'Pulp Fiction' and 'The General's Daughter,' the characters are kind of funny, says Travolta."

"Lisa Kudrow and I are probably most famous for playing sort of dim-witted characters. Lisa and I work on the same wavelength and it's really effective. She's a genius in comedy. You can see it on 'Friends' and in any one of the movies that she's done."

Travolta continues: "Tim Roth is so special. I did a movie with him five years ago—'Pulp Fiction.' That was a wonderful experience, and he's just perfect for the part of Gig.

"Ed O'Neill is a revelation because I thought of him mostly in his signature role in 'Married.With Children.' But he surprised me because he is quite different in this film and still so funny.

Great ideas

"Nora Ephron is a wonderful director. She has great ideas, a real vision and a real take on what to do with the material. Every set-up is fresh and original, and she allows us to be free to express ourselves within the character."

Lisa Kudrow couldn't be more excited to be in "Lucky Numbers."

"You know, when you get a call from Nora Ephron saying, 'I've got the best script with the best part for a woman in it, and I want you to be her,' you know that's a good day!"

Not a bad start, and working with John Travolta was an experience she won't forget.

"Everything John does (with his character) is so funny and so genuine."

Kudrow was thrilled to be working with Nora Ephron.

"She's very clear and very smart, and immediately you trust her. The things she comes up with are just so great. And when you come up with something and she enjoys it, she lets you know how much she enjoys it."

Ed O'Neill, who plays the TV station's general manager, says: "What attracted me to this project was the script, the story, Nora Ephron and the cast: John, Lisa, Tim (Roth), Bill (Pullman), Michael (Rapaport).

Station manager

"I play the station manager and Russ' and Crystal's boss. My character is also having an affair with Lisa's character. John's character is aware of my affair, but I'm not aware of his. All of this makes a difference when the story unfolds."

Tim Roth says: "I thought it would be fun to do 'Lucky Numbers' because it's a comedy and I've been involved recently in some very emotionally heavy films. I wanted to work with Nora. She's very funny. And also I knew that working with John again after 'Pulp Fiction' would be great.

"The character I play runs a strip joint and takes complete joy in destroying people's lives. He's a guy you would go to if you needed to borrow some money or if you needed to do something nefarious."

Michael Rapaport is most frequently identified with comedy.

What was unique about the script, is that everybody had their moments, which is unusual. Even the small parts have shining moments."

Rapaport plays Dale, a very unique kind of thug, who "is very interesting because on the surface, he seems like he's just rough and tough. But he is actually trying to deal with his emotions, which tend to get the best of him at times."

Best efforts

Bill Pullman plays Lakewood, a cop who is looking to avoid the full extent of the job under all circumstances. "It's curious that the story keeps involving him despite his best efforts not to be the hero and to avoid the action. In the end, he finds himself right in the middle of things inadvertently uncovering this very seriously tangled boondoggle."

Young Michael Weston plays Larry, the snowmobile salesman manning Russ Richard's dealership.

"Larry is Russ' sidekick and sort of confidant," Weston says. "As things snowball out of control, he starts to come to me for more and more advice. Larry is a sort of eccentric philosopher—sort of a weird combination of a Plato-like philosopher and one of the Brady Bunch who totally believes in himself and comes through with words that Russ believes in so much that he follows him."

Alessandra de Rossi stars in new soap opera

By Remy M. Umerez

SHE is only 16 years old and yet the few roles assigned to Alessandra de Rossi seemed unfit for young children or pre-teens to see.

In one of her drama guestings, Alessandra played a rebellious teener who had an abortion in the end. The teleplay was called "Tinig sa Kawalan."

Moving performance

Surely, you remember Carlito Seguion Reyna's controversial movie "Azucena," Alessandra's launching movie. Playing a victim of abuse, her moving performance was worthy of an acting nomination. Many wonder, how can one so young and inexperienced project so much pain?

Her manager Manny Valera says it's advantageous for Alessandra to be handled by competent directors. "They guide her well, and find her a fast absorber. She can cry at the flick of a finger. All she does is think of a very sad experience and tears easily flow," he says.

On television, Alessandra has worked with Maryo J. delos Reyes and Mel Chionglo. Both of them find Alessandra a budding artist bursting with talent.

It was however in "Kirara," the top-rating soap series produced by Tape Inc., that Alessandra gathered good feeback and convinced Tape management to conceptualize a show for her. Incidentally, she portrayed a young prostitute in "Kirara."

The new soap opera which has the support of Malou Choa-Fagar, Senior Vice President and Asst. Gen Manager of Tape, Inc is "Biglang Sibol, Bayang Impasibol." It is aired every Monday to Friday (1:30-2 p.m.) replacing "Rio del Mar" on Channel 7.

Rags to riches

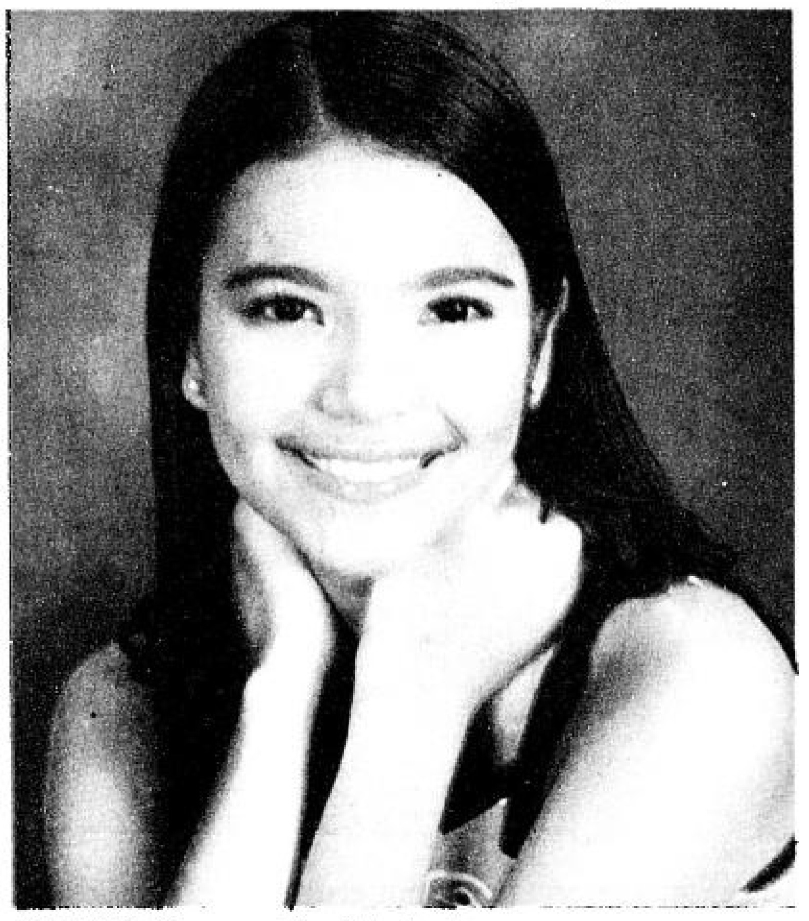
In the series, Alessandra is Angela, the daughter of Michael de Mesa. She will rise from rags to riches. Her early sufferings are at the hands of Lara Fabregas.

The star-studded cast includes Celia Rodriguez, Nestor de Villa, Jeffrey Quizon, Sylvia La Torre and Dindin Llarena (Little Miss Philippines 1999).

What makes the new series worth watching is the presence of Jeffrey Jeturian as the director. He has assisted Gina Alajar as second unit diretor of "Kirara." Some episodes of "Pirapirasong Pangarap" were also directed by Jeffrey.

To prepare for the role, Alessandra attended workshop sessions conducted by Gina Alajar.

Alessandra recently got her release from ABS-CBN Talent Center, where she had brief appearances in shows like "Cyberkada" and the most recent "Okatokat." She expressed her gratitude for the exposure the Talent Center gave her during her stint there.


DE ROSSI. Can cry at the flick of a finger.

An inspiring film that makes viewers' hearts soar

FAMILY isn't always what you're born with—sometimes it's the people you find, sometimes it's the people who find you. From Oscar-nominated director Gus Van Sant ("Good Will Hunting") comes "Finding Forrester," an uplifting story about the unusual dynamic between an isolated author and the confident teenager who changes his life.

Newcomer

Acclaimed as one of the 10 Best Films of the 2000, "Finding Forrester" stars Sean Connery, Anna Paquin and astonishing newcomer Rob Brown.

In the film, William Forrester (Connery) was a vibrant personality who wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning classic novel four decades ago. And that's the last the world heard of him.

That is until Jamal Wallace (Brown), a brash 16-year-old with writing aspirations of his own, cracks the veneer of Forrester's sheltered existence and reignites the dreams of this literary legend in the winter of his life.

Known as the neighborhood recluse, silver-haired Forrester is a man whose mystery and eccentricity border on the mythical. When Jamal, a talented African-American scholar-athlete who is recruited by an elite Manhattan prep school for his brilliance on and off the basketball court—sneaks into his apartment and accidentally leaves behind his backpack full of writings, they both get something unexpected in return. Compelled to look past skin color and suppositions, Jamal encounters not only his first fan, but a mentor who will challenge and change him forever, and Forrester has his first reason in years to emerge from his self-imposed solitude.

Contentious alliance

Through their unique, occasionally contentious alliance, Jamal navigates a new world outside of the South Bronx home he shares with his loving mother and brother. Forrester is Jamal's unlikely guide on his journey into the strange, strait-laced academic community in which he must now prove himself as a writer.

"Forrester brings out Jamal's intelligence, and Jamal brings Forrester back into life," says Rob Brown. "They need each other in a way they never imagined."

"This is just fantastic," says Connery, "the idea of an aging, cranky character becoming the mentor and friend of a young boy, a black teenager."

Forrester's apartment, full of dusty stacks of classic tomes and the furious sound of a clicking typewriter, quickly becomes the place where the two writers meet, laugh, argue, learn and dedicate themselves to the one thing that irrevocably binds them together—love for the written word.

Tutelage

Under Forrester's tutelage, Jamal injects new passion into his work and enters the school's writing contest. Forrester, alongside his youthful protégé, finds himself reawakening to the outside world he's shut out for 40 years.

Ultimately, both men defy the assumptions they initially made about one another, assumptions about race and age, history and ability.

"This is a great event for Jamal," Brown says. "No one has ever read his work with a critical eye before Forrester. It's like a dream, having someone he respects taking him seriously as a writer."

But the integrity of their friendship, as well as each man's loyalty, is tested when a charge of plagiarism is leveled against Jamal by autocratic Professor Crawford (F. Murray Abraham). Jamal's academic and athletic future is jeopardized when he is left alone to defend himself against the powers-that-be at the school.

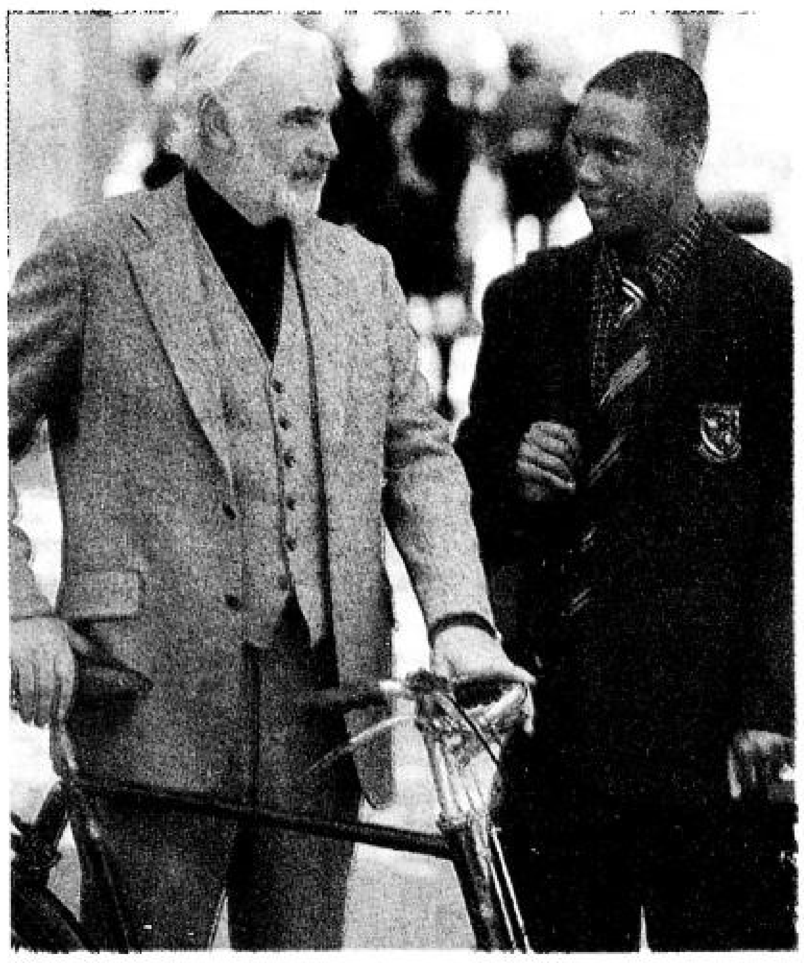
Moment of truth

It comes down to a moment of truth for both men: for Jamal, a choice between following his dream or betraying a friend, and for Forrester, a decision to remain closed off or to look at the world through new eyes.

"You need to know that while I knew so very early that you would realize your dreams," Forrester later writes to Jamal, "I never imagined I would once again realize my own."

"I think the theme of unlikely friendships is one that movies can explore with particular depth and imagination," says producer Laurence Mark.

"At any rate, it's certainly a theme that has always appealed to me. What could be more unlikely than the notion of a J. D. Salinger-like character becoming the mentor and friend to a 16-year-old, black basketball player from the South Bronx. It's unusual—and ultimately very moving."


SEAN Connery (left) and Rob Brown in "Finding Forrester."

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'Pearl Harbor' epic set for mid-year release

ON April 2, 2000, a wreath ceremony was held at the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. This was the site of Pearl Harbor, and the war memorial was built to commemorate those who died when Japanese planes bombed the US's main Pacific naval base on December 7, 1941—"a date that will live in infamy."

Start of production

It also marked the start of production for "Pearl Harbor," an ambitious new project from Jerry Bruckheimer and Michael Bay, the duo who created such worldwide box office hits as "Armageddon," "Bad Boys" and "The Rock."

Set for a Memorial Day release in the U.S., the film reportedly had, at $140 million, the biggest initial budget ever given to a film.

According to director Michael Bay, "This is the most challenging and exciting film project I have ever been involved with; it's the most passionate I've ever felt about a movie. We have a great script, an incredible cast and a subject that is emotional and highly dramatic.

"It's my hope that this film will not only entertain, but also educate a generation that is unfamiliar with the events of Pearl Harbor and its seminal role in World War II. Too often we forget those who have come before us and all that they have contributed."

Among those who participated in the ceremony were Richard Cook, chairman of the Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group, producer Bruckheimer, director/producer Bay, as well as representatives from the U.S. Navy, including Admiral Thomas Fargo, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Kate Beckinsale and Cuba Gooding, Jr. were also present.

The infamous day that jolted America from peaceful isolationism to total war and altered the course of history is relived in this epic tale of patriotism, passion and romance.

Life-changing events

"Pearl Harbor" focuses on the life-changing events surrounding December 7, 1941, and the war's devastating impact on two daring young pilots (Ben Affleck and Josh Hartnett) and a beautiful, dedicated nurse (Kate Beckinsale).

It is a tale of catastrophic defeat, heroic victory, personal courage and overwhelming love set against a stunning backdrop of spectacular wartime action.

"PEARL HARBOR." A tale of catastrophic defeat, heroic victory, personal courage and overwhelming love.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

When good films get scathing reviews

By Noelani Torre

Some Like It Not (Bad reviews of Great Movies), Aurum Press

"THIS book," says writer Ed Gorman in his introduction to 'Some Like it Not,' "is about some people who said some very foolish things and were nice enough to say them in print so we can savor them over and over again."

Compilation

"Some Like It Not" *is* a compilation of negative, often scathing reviews of films now considered masterpieces and classics, top-grossers and cult favorites, and of their major acting, directing and writing talents. The authors, Ardis Sillick and Michael McCormick, based this collection on nearly 100,00 reviews which they "had to spend years gathering." The result is seven chapters of immensely quotable quotes from some "wonderfully daft reviews":

Chapter One, "Maligned Masterpieces: The Great Films and the Critics Who Missed It," reveals that no film, despite the numerous awards it's won, escapes from a bad review or two.

For example, "Annie Hall" (Academy Award winner for Best Picture, Screenplay, Director, etc) was attacked by critic John Simon.

"With Annie Hall," he wrote, "Woody Allen has truly underreached himself...his new film is painful in three separate ways: an unfunny comedy, poor moviemaking, and embarrassing self-revelation. It is everything we never wanted to know about Woody's sex life and were afraid he'd tell us anyway. And now he does...

"It is a film so shapeless, sprawling, repetitious, and aimless as to seem to beg for oblivion."

Full of holes

Other great movies that garnered similar remarks from some critics were "Adam's Rib" ("...A sophisticated effort that turns out mainly silly."), "Bonnie and Clyde" ("...rides off in all directions and ends up 'full of holes."), "Dr. Strangelove" ("...twirpish twiddle..."), "Fanny and Alexander" ("...an overstuffed film") "Psycho" ("...a nasty little film..."), "Sunset Boulevard" ("...pure celluloid..."), "The Third Man" ("...like a wheel-less freight train..."), and "Rashomon" ("...isn't likely to provide much sound diversion...")

Whew. One wonders what films these critics *did* like!

Chapter Two, "Who Listens to the Critics Anyway? Scathing Reviews of the Most Popular Movies of All Time," proves that critics don't always speak for the general viewing public.

"Alien," called "an overblown B-movie," was one of the top five box-office hits of 1979.

The top box-office hit of all time, "E. T.," was "really 'Lassie' in science fiction drag," said critic Robert Asahina. And as for Tom Jacobs' advice to "better stay home alone than to go out and see 'Home Alone,'" it was obviously disregarded by viewers, who made the film one of the 10 box-office hits of all time.

Minimally effective

Chapter Three, "Who Knew? Certainly Not the Critics! Bad Early Reviews of Future Stars" leaves one wondering what those critics would be saying now. Like the one who thought Warren Beatty's face "on the weak side, and doesn't always photograph well" and Stanley Kauffman who declared that Tom Cruise "isn't very appealing."

Ingrid Bergman was "a rather over-heated Hepburn" and Jodie Foster "only minimally effective" in her role in "Taxi Driver." (She got an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress and won the British Academy for Film and Television Arts award for Best Supporting Actress!)

The King himself, Elvis Presley, was described as "a young man of hulk and probably flabby muscle, with a degenerate face, who sings emasculated innuendoes in a southern drawl as he strums a guitar...

In Chapter Four, "Shooting Stars: Critical Potshots at Major Talents," a series of reviews by one critic about one actress stand out in particular for its viciousness: "Miss Streisand looks like a cross between an aardvark and an albino rat surmounted by a platinum-coated horse bun," wrote John Simon.

Speaking voice

"Her speaking voice seems to have graduated with top honors from the Brooklyn Conservatory of Yentaism, and her acting consists of fishily thrusting out her lips, sounding like a cabbie bellyaching at breakneck speed, and throwing her weight around."

He goes on and on, calling her nose "a ziggurat made of meat," describing her as "both knock-kneed and ankleless, short-waisted and shapeless, scrag-toothed and with a horse face centering on a nose that looks like Brancusi's Rooster cast in liverwurst." Her nose preoccupied him so that he hardly mentioned anything else in supposed critiques of the actress' acting.

The Fifth Chapter, "Trashed Treasures: Cult Favorites the Critics Dumped On," shows how some people, when they like a movie, don't care at all about what the critics say.

"Among the movie's lambasted were "Badlands" (". . .bad news. . ."), "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" ("...about as appetizing as warmed-over spinach..."), and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" ("...positively tedious..."). Well, they're still playing, and people are still watching!

Critics will be with us for as long as films are made. They are, in fact, an essential part of the process. They challenge filmmakers to do better but they can also be devastating and unnecessarily cruel. "Some Like It Not" is "a little vengeance on behalf of writers, directors, actors, composers, and producers everywhere." As for the puzzled viewer, go and watch the films yourself, and make up your own mind.

California appeals court hears arguments in 'Pinocchio' case

By Erica Werner

LOS ANGELES—Director Francis Ford Coppola and Warner Bros. have taken their fight over "Pinocchio" and an $80 million jury verdict to the California Court of Appeals.

Ruling

A ruling in the case, which prompted one judge to wonder aloud about the status of Pinocchio's nose during the hearing held Friday last week, was expected within 60 days.

A Los Angeles Superior Court jury ruled in July 1998 that Warner Bros. falsely claimed to have a deal with Coppola, thus preventing him from making a movie with Columbia Pictures.

The trial judge later threw out the $60 million punitive damage award, however, leaving Coppola with $20 million in compensatory damages.

The director appealed to have the punitive damages reinstated while Warner Bros. appealed to have the compensatory damages dismissed.

Before a three-judge panel, Coppola's attorney, Robert. S. Chapman, defended the basis for the punitive damage award, which requires a finding of outrageous conduct, malice or fraud.

"Even though Warner knew their position was false, because of personal animus, they were going to stop Francis Coppola," he said. Coppola, who directed the "Godfather" films, has argued that the case was driven by former Warner Bros. heads Bob Daly and Terry Semel and their dislike for him.

Warner Bros. attorney Frederic D. Cohen said the studio was not acting maliciously in objecting when Coppola took the "Pinocchio" script to Columbia. He said Warner Bros. genuinely believed it had a deal with Coppola and was entitled to try to work out a settlement rather than relinquish the project.

"Should Warner have just sat by with its hands in its pockets while it felt its project was being taken to another studio?" Cohen asked.

Wooden puppet

Pinocchio, the wooden puppet whose nose lengthens every time he tells a lie, took center stage only once during the arguments.

"If you'll allow me a bit of humor, I'm wondering about Pinocchio's nose during those negotiations," Associate Justice Fred Woods remarked to Cohen after listening to him talk about discussions between Coppola and Warner Bros.

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Saturday SPECIAL

AGA. Miscast.

TV PREMIERE

Muhlach works hard for the comedy

The initial episode must be credited for trying to make its 90-minute running time eventful

By Nestor U. Torre

TWO Saturdays ago, Au Cobarrubias threw a joint birthday party for Haydee Yorac and Cynthia Patag at her lovely San Juan home, and among the guests were some leading politicians, activists and political pundits.

Scintillating

Their views and analyses were astute and scintillating, but we couldn't savor them. Why? Because we were scrunched in a corner in front of a TV set, watching the first telecast of "Da Body en Da Guard," Channel 2's new sitcom starring Aga Muhlach and Joyce Jimenez.

Our hope, of course, was that the 90-minute sitcom would offer some entertaining moments that would compensate for our having missed out on that scintillating conversation.

Initially, our spirits dipped when we saw that Aga was miscast in the role of a security guard. That someone so obviously loaded with positive attributes would settle for such a poorly-paid position is the height of show biz fantasy!

Eventful

On the other hand, we were elated to see Aga working hard to keep his new show peppy and eventful—which, unfortunately, was more than we could say for Joyce, who just sort of smiled and sashayed her facile way through the premiere episode.

We hope that Joyce will work harder in the coming weeks. Even if she *is* delicious and scrumptious and all that, physical appeal and "assets" aren't enough to keep a 90-minute sitcom interesting and entertaining.

Little soldiers

Other "down" moments: the show's title is leaden and doesn't scintillate. And the show's basic family situation of Joyce and her younger siblings being ordered about like little soldiers by their emotionally-limited dad (Bonggoy Manahan) and the mansion's *mayordomo* (Roderick Paulate) is straight out of "The Sound of Music" (oh no, not *again*!).

In addition, Roderick's flaming-fairy portrayal of the *mayordomo*, complete with long, long scarf, is reminiscent of comedy, Sampaguita Pictures-style—in the 1950s!

All those decades have gone by, and we *still* get this antedelluvian sort of humor? It's like time has stood still for half a century—or, more properly, expired from acute lack of fresh inspiration.

Fluff

But the initial episode must be credited for trying to make its 90-minute running time eventful—which is saying a lot, because most of our 90-minute comedy shows actually have enough real comic material for only a 30-minute program, and the rest of the time is stretched and filled out with fluff.

In the new Aga-Joyce sitcom, at least, things happen every now and then, and some subplots are introduced that weave in and out of the main storyline.

Unusual

Even better, the script doesn't simply concentrate on the major characters, but gives supporting and even cameo characters some interesting things to do. Again, this is unusual for a local sitcom, which usually builds up its lead characters to the exclusion of just about everybody else.

As a result, events appear to be taking place in a vacuum peopled only by the show's stars. Of course, plots and characters presented without a sense of context are not to be believed and empathized with. Happily, in Channel 2's new sitcom, this problem does not exist.

Subplot

Which is not to say that the show is a rip-roaring success. Its dated elements rob it of considerable freshness, and the first episode's subplot about Joyce's father being the object of an assassination attempt, was presented in too whimsical a manner to be believed.

Sure, this is "only" a comedy show, but its proceedings can't be as facile and silly as this. The other people on the show should take their cue from Aga, and work hard for the comedy.

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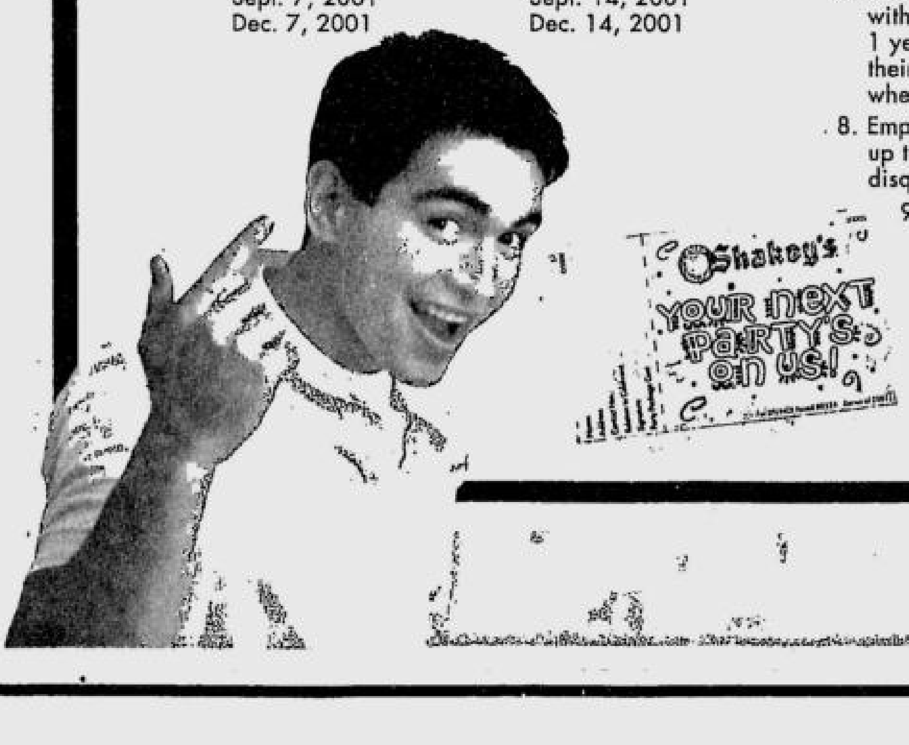
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SHOW WORLD

Ricky Martin dates Latvian model

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Puerto Rican pop star Ricky Martin has a new woman in his life.

Ricky Martin was spotted at the recent music festival in San Remo, Italy, with Latvian model Ines Misan, local newspapers in Martin's hometown of San Juan reported Monday, displaying pictures of the two holding hands in London.

"She's his friend at the moment ... I can't confirm that she's his girlfriend, but they've been seeing each other," Nanette Lamboy, a spokeswoman for Martin's San Juan-based manager, told The Associated Press.

Lamboy couldn't confirm Misan's age, which San Juan papers said was 34, nor how or when the two met, which local media said was about four months ago in New York.

"They're together in London," Lamboy said, where Martin is promoting his new record, "Sound Loaded." He will soon leave for Germany, likely with Misan at his side, Lamboy said.

Primera Hora newspaper reported that Misan made headlines in 1997 when her then-boyfriend, Wall Street tycoon John Lattanzio, went to court to reclaim an engagement ring valued at $289,000.

No one was able to confirm Monday that the Latvian model named Ines Misan involved in the 1997 New York court case was the same woman involved with Martin.

"I haven't seen her in years," said Raoul Felder, the attorney who represented Misan in the case. "It is an unusual name though."

Grant gives birth to baby girl

NASHVILLE, Tennessee—Singer Amy Grant gave birth to a baby girl early Monday. The child is her fourth and the first with her husband, country singer Vince Gill.

Grant gave birth in a Nashville hospital, said Gill's spokeswoman Allison Auerbach. The child weighs 3.4 kilograms (7 pounds and 9 ounces).

Gill and Grant were married on March 10, 2000.

Grant has three children with ex-husband Gary Chapman, a Christian music singer and television host: Matt, 13; Millie, 11; and Sarah, 8. Gill has an 18-year-old daughter, Jenny, with ex-wife Janis Gill, who sings with the duo country music duo Sweethearts of the Rodeo.

Tribute to Janet Jackson

LOS ANGELES—Before Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, there was Janet Jackson, with her choreographed songs and trendsetting fashion.

Now, in a one-hour, star-studded salute to the singer-songwriter-actress, the music channel is honoring Jackson with the first in an annual series of tribute shows – "mtvICON," which aired Tuesday night.

"I can't wait to see how it's put together and how the performances turn out," Jackson told The Associated Press at the show's taping on Saturday.

Among those taking the stage to perform versions of Jackson's music are Destiny's Child, Macy Gray, OutKast and Buckcherry. There's also a special dance tribute by Pink, Usher and Mya.

"Then I have to get up there and perform after everyone else," Jackson said. "That's the part I'm going to be stressing about because you always have your performance in the back of your head. Normally, when you're honored you get up, give a speech and that's it. But I still have to perform."

The singer's friends and family also took part in the show's live taping.

"We're excited for her. She really deserves it. She's worked hard for this," said brother Jermaine Jackson, who attended with his brothers Tito, Marlon and Jackie. Michael Jackson appeared in a taped segment.

Janet Jackson's new album, "All For You," is due in stores in April.

Glover helps celebrate diversity

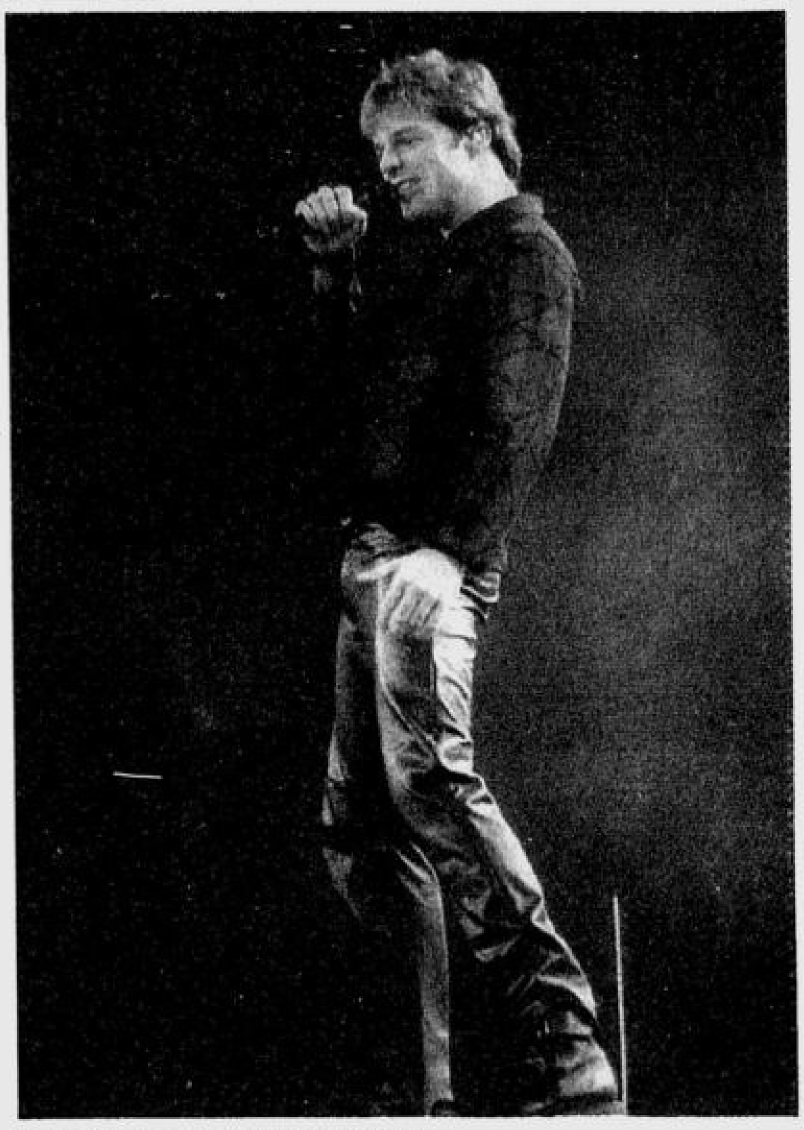
WATERVILLE, Maine—Grabbing a cab in New York City may be a whole lot easier, thanks to Danny Glover.

The actor, who played Mel Gibson's sidekick in the "Lethal Weapon" movies, complained in 1999 to the city's taxi commission that cabbies passed him by because he's black.

"Most black men I meet in New York City thank me because now they can get a cab," Glover told about 300 Colby College students.

Speaking at the private college on Saturday to help celebrate diversity, Glover told students to reject divisive social, ethnic and religious stereotypes and look at the world in a new way.

"Diversity is about honoring and celebrating our interdependence, our basic humanness," he said. "It's the very best of who we are." *AP*



MARTIN. A new woman in his life.

Unlikely partners wreak havoc in 'Double Take'

ORLANDO Jones (left) plays a banker who switches identities with a petty thief, played by Eddie Griffin.

COMEDY and chaos reign when a big shot banker meets a fast-talking hood in Touchstone Pictures' "Double Take." The fun begins when New York investment banker Daryl Chase (Orlando Jones of "The Replacements") finds himself suddenly on the run and having to switch identities with low-life petty thief Freddy Tiffany (Eddie Griffin).

Charmed life

Until now, Daryl's led a charmed life. However, everything is turned upside down when he is framed for laundering millions for a Mexican drug cartel.

Wanted by the FBI and seeing no other alternative, he makes a run for the border to find the one man who can clear his name.

To his horror, Daryl discovers that his new alias, Freddy, ranks much higher on the fugitive food chain of Most Wanted Criminals than he is. For this banker-turned-fugitive, survival means staying one step ahead of the cartel, the law, his unwanted "partner," and a little dog!

"Double Take" is loosely based on a 1957 black and white melodrama called "Across the Bridge" starring Rod Steiger. The film is the story of a man charged with embezzlement, who heads for the Mexican border with a dog to escape.

While on the train, he meets another guy, steals his ID, throws him off the train and sneaks away, assuming the guy's identity. As he reaches the border, he quickly discovers that the man whose identity he has stolen is wanted for assassinating a guy in Mexico.

Male leads

Director George Gallo knew exactly whom he wanted to play the two male leads. "Orlando Jones and Eddie Griffin. Period. The end. Wrap it up."

The director and producers knew Orlando's work from "Mad TV" and were fans. Jones also appeared recently in "The Replacements" with Keanu Reeves and Gene Hackman, and was doing an upcoming feature called "Evolution" opposite Julianne Moore and former "X-Files" star David Duchovny.

They also knew Eddie Griffin for his hit comedy series "Malcolm and Eddie," and also for unforgettable roles like jacuzzi-loving pimp in the smash comedy "Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo."

Both Eddie Griffin and Orlando Jones quickly agreed to play the parts of Freddy Tiffany and Daryl Chase, respectively.

Full of energy

Says Jones, "I read a lot of scripts, and one thing that made me want to do this film was the character I get to play. Daryl Chase is a full of energy, bigger-then-life kind of guy. He affects people.

"It was this great character, plus the opportunity to work with Eddie Griffin and George Gallo, that made me want to do this. I just couldn't pass up."

The genre for "Double Take" would normally be action/comedy, but producer David Permut would rather dub it "comedy/action." "I think the comedy is in the forefront. The action is real, the jeopardy is real, and the more real it is, the funnier it is," he says.

Rachel Alejandro has a new album from Viva Records

FRESH from her performance in the Singapore Repertory's production of "Rent," Rachel Alejandro recently launched her full-length debut album under Viva Records, "Tanging Pangarap." The album's 12 tracks document Rachel's journey of maturity and self-discovery.

MONTAGE

The 27-year-old singer says she has finally established a harmonious balance between her career and personal life, and this makes her very happy. "Tanging Pangarap" deals with relationships and the idea of being true to oneself. "We must not be afraid to cry if we are sad and we should not hesitate to laugh if we are happy," says Rachel.

The carrier single, "Tanging Pangarap" concerns a woman's hesitation to confess her true feelings for the man she loves. It is a composition by Rachel and the special man in her life, Lee Robin Salazar. Another song, ""High on Love" deals with the triumph of love while "Be Free to Be in Love " shows how freedom and love can go together.

ALEJANDRO. A journey of self-discovery.

TEEN HEARTS. Busy with mall tours.

All-girl band

Teenhearts, a group of 16-year-old young ladies, Aisha, Jaybee, Donna and Marielle, has come up with its debut album under Istilo Records of Star Records. The group was chosen after Larry Hermoso, the man behind Jeremiah and Formula, conducted intensive auditions for an all-girl band.

Two of the album's singles, "Di Mo Kaya" and "Ikaw Lang," have been getting good airplay.

Teenhearts is now busy with mall tours to promote its album. The group will perform today, March 17 at SM Bacoor and March 18 at SM Pampanga. The series kicked off last March 2 at SM Iloilo.

New cooking show

Here comes a cooking show that's not only for housewives but also for every member of the family, "cooking.dot.com." It does have a technical sounding name but that's because the recipes on the show will soon be featured on the Internet. The show airs every Sunday at 10 a.m. on RPN-9 and is hosted by comedian Arnell Ignacio and culinary expert Nancy Lumen.

This cooking show is different in that it aims to teach the average Pinoy family to prepare simple and even elaborate dishes using familiar ingredients. The show also incorporates interesting pieces of information such as household and kitchen tips, social graces and table etiquette, culinary customs around the world, family values, and *palengke* tips.

Eraserheads online

Soundbuzz.com now carries BMG's online release of The Eraserheads new single, "Maskara" from their upcoming album "Carbon Stereoxide." The track will also be available for sale as a secure download in Windows Media Audio format on www.sounbdbuzz.com.

Fans will be able to listen to "Maskara" until April 8. Thirty winners will be able to download the single for free and win t-shirts. From the 30 winners, one will be chosen to greet The Eraserheads in person and get featured on Buzz Fare.

Viva Cinema, Year Five

Divas, stars of the silver screen and TV, comedy icons and musical delights headline the upcoming Year 5 celebration of Viva Cinema. The event is the star-studded finale of the Philippine Cable Show 2001, the annual convention and exhibit of the Philippine Association of Cable Operators, which will be held on March 30 at the Manila Hotel.

Slated to grace the event are stars from Viva Entertainment as well as Rica Peralejo, star of "Balahibong Pusa" and "Sa Huling Paghihintay" and comedians Arnell Ignacio and Marissa Sanchez. R&B band Mulatto will also be present, along with the teen group Kaya, balladeer Marco Sison and pop star Rannie Raymundo.

'Bayaning Third World' should have gone to the Oscars

BY RAMON REY E. BAYRON

IT'S crystal clear by now that we won't be hearing the word "Philippines" in this year's edition of the Academy Awards. We could have, but we chose not to. Pity us really, especially in the light of our fellow Asians' (Vietnamese, Iranian, Taiwanese) leapfrogging over us for the honor.

For Oscar 2001, Asia will most likely put its bet on Taiwan courtesy of the mesmerizing "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" so wonderfully directed by Ang Lee. And it is not just competing in the Best Foreign Film category, it is also in the running for Best Picture.

Against the seen-that-before spectacle of "Gladiator" and the limited contemporary" theme of "Erin Brockovich," "Crouching..." has the edge.

The twin-category nomination is tantamount to conceding the Best Foreign Film plum to the Taiwanese. That it would bring home a best director or best picture in the main competition is a different story.

Nonetheless, with the bald golden statuette at hand, Taiwan would once again be earning the respect and admiration of the West, rising above the racist notion of the "inferior" East.

Winning team

As an Asian, that's enough reason for me to root for Taiwan, along with two billion others. Only the Filipinos could have also been part of the winning team, not just the crowd.

CRIS Villanueva and Ricky Davao in Mike de Leon's "Bayaning Third World."

"Bayaning Third World" could have brought us into the limelight, and we need that more than the Taiwanese. Daydreaming? Answer the following objectively and find out why "pity" is the precise word.

"Crouching" is an impressive achievement, but isn't "Bayaning Third World?" also an exceptional film? The former is distinctively rich in local (Taiwanese) insights and study, but could the latter get anymore "local" than it already is? Theme-per-theme, scope-per-scope, which of the two films is more all-encompassing? Tip: "lost swords" or "lost souls"?

Where Ang Lee is faultless, Mike De Leon is inventive. "Crouching" is wisely traditional, "Bayaning ..."" is cutting-edge. Could "Bayaning Third World" hold a candle against "Crouching"? Answer most objectively.

The Philippine film industry had a chance to finally be recognized in the country where it matters most. We only needed to send our "Bayaning Third World" to the Oscars, but instead we sent a cry-baby.

The criteria used for the selection? Well probably for this year, it was the box-office, thus the choice, But the Oscar's Best Foreign Film category is *not* the Gatpuno Memorial Award. Last I heard, it is still an overtly artistic arena, despite what critics say. Excellence remains one of the major factors in considering its finalists, and ultimately the winner.

Honor

Simply put, the participating countries are expected to send their best, nothing more, nothing less. Of course, that is if the country is serious in its bid for the golden statue and the honor and opportunities it will bring to the local industry.

A scary thought troubles this writer that compelled me to write this piece: "Do Filipinos have a penchant for ignoring, side-stepping and belittling Rizal? Are we ashamed to promote his vision and thoughts overseas?

It seems so, and that's scary, considering that this industry exerts an undeniable influence over a vast majority in of our population, even successfully (?) sending one of its own to Malacañang.

Going overboard? I don't think so. Especially not now. Remember how GMA Films practically became the laughing stock of producers for bankrolling a P80+ million production in Gat Jose Rizal's honor? Some were still giggling even after the movie "Jose Rizal" eventually recouped its investment and took home practically all available local awards.

With the trend clearly in place then, simple logic dictated that the film was the most qualified to represent the Philippines in the world's most prestigious film competition. But by some twist of bitter fate, Jose Rizal was made to give way to "a boy flying his kite," attesting once more that logic isn't one of the industry's finer virtues.

Decision

Then, the news about Mike De Leon's decision to finally create his own take on Rizal came, and the whole industry waited with bated breath for its completion. Everyone knew that if there was one filmmaker who could steal the tag of "the definitive film on Rizal" from Marilou Abaya's "Jose Rizal," it was De Leon. And not only did he not fall short of expectations, he surpassed all of them via the liberal and liberating "Bayaning Third World."

Problem was, it had no major studio to back it up, no major star, not even a government endorsement from DECS. So, this newspaper took the task of promoting the film prior to its commercial run last January.

Earlier, because "Bayaning Third World'' was a groundbreaking photoplay and the comeback of the sorely-missed genius Mike De Leon, some sectors asked the Metro Manila Film Festival Committee (1999) to relax its rules on deadlines to accommodate the film, thus improving its roster of competing entries and bringing back to the festival back to its original purpose of being.

Efforts

Yet in spite of those efforts, Doy Del Mundo and Mike De Leon's collaborative masterpiece only received lukewarm response at the box-office, proving the MMFF Committee "right" in settling for the "more-qualified" five (5) year soap-turned-two-hour-movie epic, "Esperanza" rather than "break the rules" for the national hero.

Which makes the whole scenario even more eerily ironic since that's exactly what the great Jose Rizal did for us Filipinos, "break the rules" so the nation may be free... free even to choose "Esperanza" over him.

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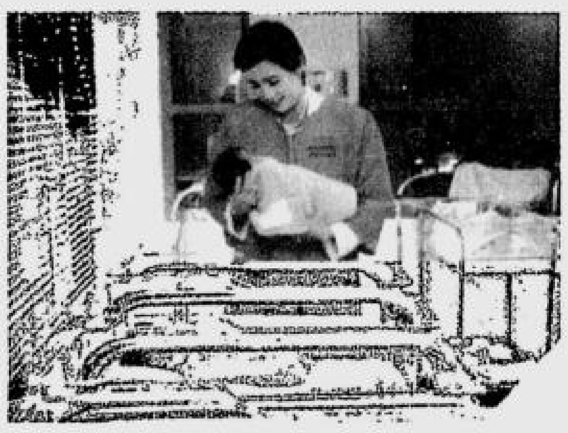

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Drs. Johnny and Olive Go value keeping strong bonds within the family. "We have been using another network's service for six years when our son, who was in his teens, bugged us to switch to Globe," Johnny tells us. The couple immediately subscribed to Globe Handyphone Prepaid Plus' service and provided cellphones for the entire family for a total Globe connection. That was three years ago.

"On my part, it's easier to check on the kids' whereabouts. And they text me, on their own, even if I don't require them to do so. It's really so practical," shares Olive.

For Johnny, who specializes on emergency cases—he depends on his Globe Handyphone to monitor his patients even when out of town. "Globe solved my anxiety problem. Once I had to call my resident by the hour to check on a patient under critical condition while I was in Butuan for a convention," he enthuses.

While their now 15-year-old son had his SIM upgraded to GlobeXplore, the Gos got an additional Plan Subscription. "With Globe, we can now text and call whenever we're abroad for conventions," Olive explains.

"Sometimes, I find myself stuck in traffic, so I'd call my wife just to hear her voice—and that of our three-year-old daughter. Perhaps we should get her one soon," Johnny jests.

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Saturday SPECIAL

AFFLECK. The winning script wasn't Hollywood in any way.

Affleck, Damon give 'green light' to unknown writer

By Bob Tourtellotte

LOS ANGELES—Two of Hollywood's top young stars, Matt Damon and Ben Affleck, gave their own version of a film studio "green light" to unknown writer-director Pete Jones on Thursday last week, naming him the winner of a $1 million filmmaking contest.

Climax

Jones' victory provided the climax to a series of events this week, including a Hollywood-style movie premiere on Monday.

AFFLECK/p.G2

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Feb. 12 to Feb 18	Feb. 21
Feb. 19 to Feb. 25	Feb. 28
Feb. 26 to March 4	March 7
March 5 to March 11	March 14
March 12 to March 18	March 21
March 19 to March 25	March 28
March 26 to April 1	April 4

A DTI representative will be present at each draw.
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8. Winners will be notified by registered mail. Complete list of winners will be published in a major newspaper with national circulation at the end of the promo.

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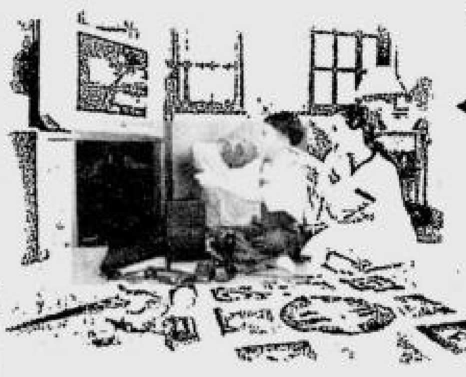


Affleck, Damon give 'green light' to unknown writer

(From page G1)

as the top stars promoted the "Project Greenlight" screenwriting contest they have been conducting on the Web through the site they co-own, Liveplanet.com.

The contest began last autumn and more than 7,300 screenplays were entered. In the past few months, the field was narrowed down to Jones' "Stolen Summer," about two young boys trying to understand death, differences in religions and what it takes to get into heaven Jones now goes on to make his movie with a $1 million budget and the two stars as executive producers. Miramax Films will distribute the movie, which begins production next week, and Miramax's television division is making a documentary of the process that will air on HBO in early 2002.

"When they told me I won, I didn't have any emotion left," Jones said in a conference call with reporters. "When it actually happens, it's not like you expect it."

Premiere

The week's events included a showing at a velvet-roped premiere in Hollywood of one scene that he and nine semifinalists shot from their scripts, several parties and a spotlight on NBC's "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

Jones said he had kicked around Los Angeles for about three years, looking for any break that would get his foot in the door in the notoriously tough motion picture business, but he had so far been unable to make any headway.

Before taking his stab at Hollywood celebrity, the 31-year-old had been living in Chicago and working as an insurance salesman. In Los Angeles, he was supported by his wife, Jenny, a teacher, and "a lot of debt."

"Really, this is the first time I've had a chance to get anything out," he said. "I've never even gotten as far as (film) development hell, and if I had, well, that would have been heaven."

Barriers

Damon, Affleck and their Liveplanet.com business partner Chris Moore, who is also a movie producer, said they started the contest as a way to break down traditional barriers to moviemaking in Hollywood, where the phrase, "It's not what you know, but who you know," takes on added meaning.

"We've always had a problem with the gatekeeper system," Damon said. "We ran into that with 'Good Will Hunting.' Miramax was the only place that said they'd do it, and we tried everywhere."

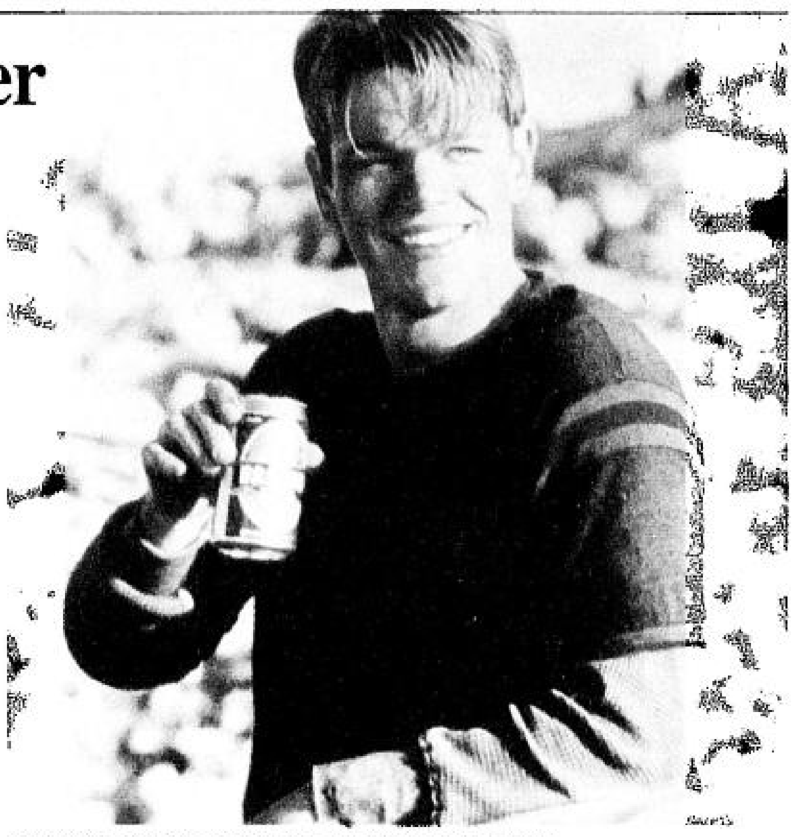
The two actors struggled to make a career for themselves before penning the screenplay for "Good Will Hunting." Miramax ended up making the movie with them as stars, and it became one of 1997's big hits. It made them instant celebrities and earned them an Oscar for best original screenplay.

Emblematic

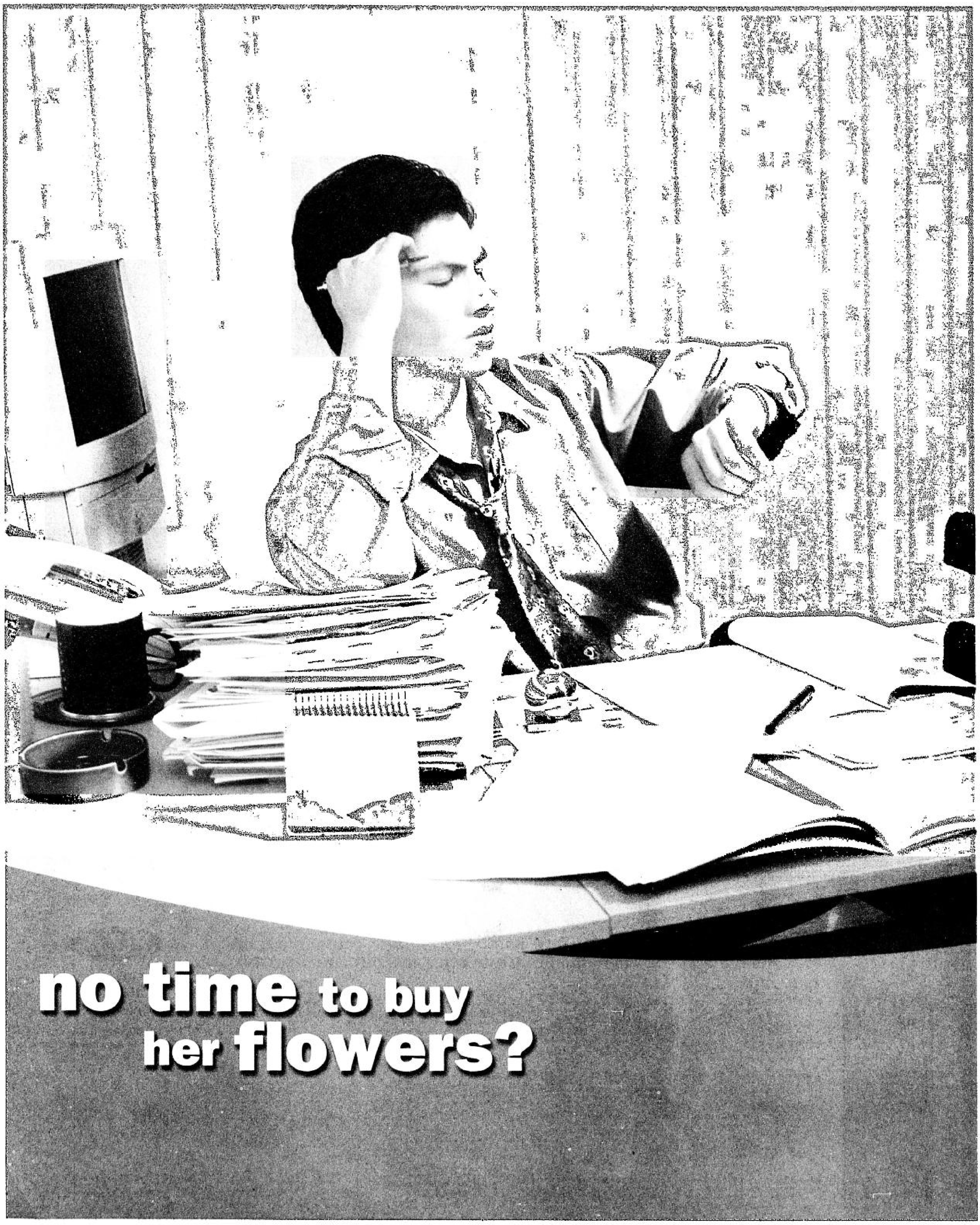
"Pete's script ... it was emblematic of the kind of things we were looking for with this contest," Affleck said. "In addition to a wonderful heartfelt story about real people, it wasn't derivative. It wasn't Hollywood in any way."

The two actors said they hoped the widely publicized contest would bring even more scripts to a second "Project Greenlight" contest they plan to hold. They hope to get more female writers and a greater diversity of voices in the next round.

"We're convinced that there are writers out there who really deserve to be working, deserve to be in this business," Damon said.



DAMON. Problem with the gatekeeper system.



ILAGAN. Senior host

Business as usual on Ch. 2's new 'Alas Singko Y Medya'

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Monday, we stayed home the whole day to sample Channel 2's new "post-Noli De Castro" programming: a revitalized "Alas Singko Y Medya" early in the morning, "Talk TV" in place of "Today with Kris" at 10:30 a.m., followed by the new telenovela "Camila" at 11:30 am., then by "Balitang Kris" replacing "Balitang K" at 5:30 p.m., and Korina Sanchez stepping into De Castro's shoes on "TV Patrol" at 6 p.m.

New hosts

"Alas Singko..." is now hosted by Mon Ilagan, Cheryl Cosim, Cherri Mercado, Bobby Yan and Pia Guanio because Tintin Bersola and Julius Babao have been pushed up to "Talk TV." So, how does the show hold up?

It's pretty much business as usual—which makes us realize that Channel 2 is really making too big a deal about its "musical chairs" roundelay of program hosts.

Oppurtunity

This is unfortunate, because the channel could have taken this change of guard on some of its shows as an opportunity for some really significant changes, paring away old wood, getting rid of portions that don't work all that well, etc.

For instance, on "Alas Singko..." some section hosts continue to do sluggish, mediocre work even after years of being on the show, so why couldn't they have been replaced by new people who have more going for them?

Be that as it may, let's focus on the waker-upper show's five new co-hosts: Mon Ilagan is the senior member of the team, so he shouldn't have to compete with the others in terms of vim, vigor and vitality. Let him handle the more in-depth aspects of the show.

Cosim is too relentlessly breezy and her hair coloring is a distraction. Mercado comes across as more focused and sensible.

Bobby Yan's projection is a bit too *porma*. All told, it's Pia Guanio who comes off best among the show's newcomers—except for that off-putting eyeshadow (so early in the morning)!

Helicopter

Guanio rides the show's helicop-

BUSINESS/ p.G4

GUANIO. The best of the newcomers

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TWO FOR THE SHOW

Not the best of the lot

By Mary Ann A. Bautista
and Ricky T. Gallardo

FEWER people take the Binibining Pilipinas seriously these days, specially after last Saturday's pageant. We join the people who believe that the once prestigious beauty pageant has become a joke.

How can we expect to do well in international competitions when the girls chosen to represent us are unexpectional?

We are not saying that all the candidates this year were rotten apples in a nice big basket. But the winners were, to our mind, not the best of the lot.

We even received some text messages a few minutes after the pageant, one of which read: "As a beauty contest enthusiast, I believe that something should be done to ameliorate the dying standard of our national pastime."

Some people in this country take beauty pageants seriously. We see their point. These girls are chosen to represent our country, and if we send only the mediocre ones like the new Bb. Pilipinas World Gireah Quinzon and the Bb. Pilipinas International Maricar Tolosa, how can we compete globally?

Afterthoughts on the Star Awards

On the other hand, we are happy to see that the members of the Philippine Movie Press Club have elevated their standards for selecting their awardees, except for a few questionable choices. The major winners of the recent Star Awards proved that the people who comprise the voting members of the organizations have done a good job.

The low-key Mike de Leon got another feather in his already much decorated cap with "Bayaning Third World" garnering six of the major awards.

Vilma Santos winning the Best Actress plum over Gloria Romero is very well-deserved, for certainly her role in "Anak" had a higher level of difficulty compared to that of Romero's Alzheimer-stricken matriarch in "Tanging Yaman."

Gloria was touching in her role but became a passive character during her illness, while Vilma's character played an active role as a grief-stricken, guilt-ridden and problematic mom to her children.

Carlos Morales' first win as Best Actor is also laudable. He was consistently focused with his character in "Laro sa Baga."

Jeffrey Quizon is on a roll in the Supporting Actor category after his remarkable portrayal of the young "Markova."

Angel Aquino's win was a welcome surprise even if we question why she was relegated to support status in "Laro sa Baga."

Repeats for Ai-Ai, Gary V, Regine and Jaya

'Tis the season for repeat performances, shows and concerts. Tonight, comedy concert queen Ai Ai de las Alas unleashes the first of her four repeats of her very successful "People Power II: Campaign Me" show at the Music Museum, with guests Vibora and Ate Guy.

Gary Valenciano is glad that his "Gary V: By Request" concert took off as expected, so he has decided to extend it to eight more shows starting next weekend. The new venue will be the ON Stage Theater in Greenbelt and it will be produced by the Maximedia Group.

We saw Gary last week and he said that after this series, he is set to fly to the United States for a five-city concert tour.

Finally, Jaya and Regine Velasquez will try to extend their winning streak by having a final repeat of "Independent Women" at the Folk Arts Theater tonight. The show has gotten good reviews because of its unique repertoire, styling and presentation.

A1 says sorry

The planned mall show of the leading boy band A1 didn't happen at the SM North Edsa Mall last Sunday because there were just too many people at the venue, prompting mall's security personnel to suggest cancellation because the crowd was too huge to control.

Upon learning of the incident, the A1 immediately issued an official press statement to express how disappointed and sorry they felt for not being able to perform for their Filipino fans.

Excerpts from the statement: "We send you all our love. We wanted to perform but the people who came were just too huge a number to contain, in fact, bigger than the venue could accommodate, and we didn't want to put the safety of the people at risk. We look forward to coming back to the Philippines in the near future!"

Dessa sings sentimental songs again

Dessa loves songs about agony and pain. Her versions of "It Might Be You," "Best of My Love," "If I'm Not In Love With You," "Fallin'," "I Will Survive," and "Healing" give her a feeling of release everytime she sings them.

Watch her perform in "Dessa Brings Back the Times" on March 28, 8:30 p.m. at the E!Place on Tomas Morato. Call 721-1039.

SANTOS. A well-deserved Best Actress award for "Anak"

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Business as usual

(From page G3)

ter to give bird's-eyeview traffic updates. Unlike other young hosts who follow standard formats, she peppers her spiels with refreshing asides that indicate that she has a good head on her shoulders and is her own person.

The show makes a big to-do about its helicopter, pointing out that "the other channel" doesn't have this high-tech advantage.

For traffic avoidance purposes, however, the helicopter isn't all that helpful, since most of the time, it just takes shots of traffic jams, and the show doesn't offer alternative routes out of the gridlock.

Extra service

It really should provide that extra service, or else everyone will be reduced to just staring at all those "dramatic" top shots of gridlock—without being able to do anything about it.

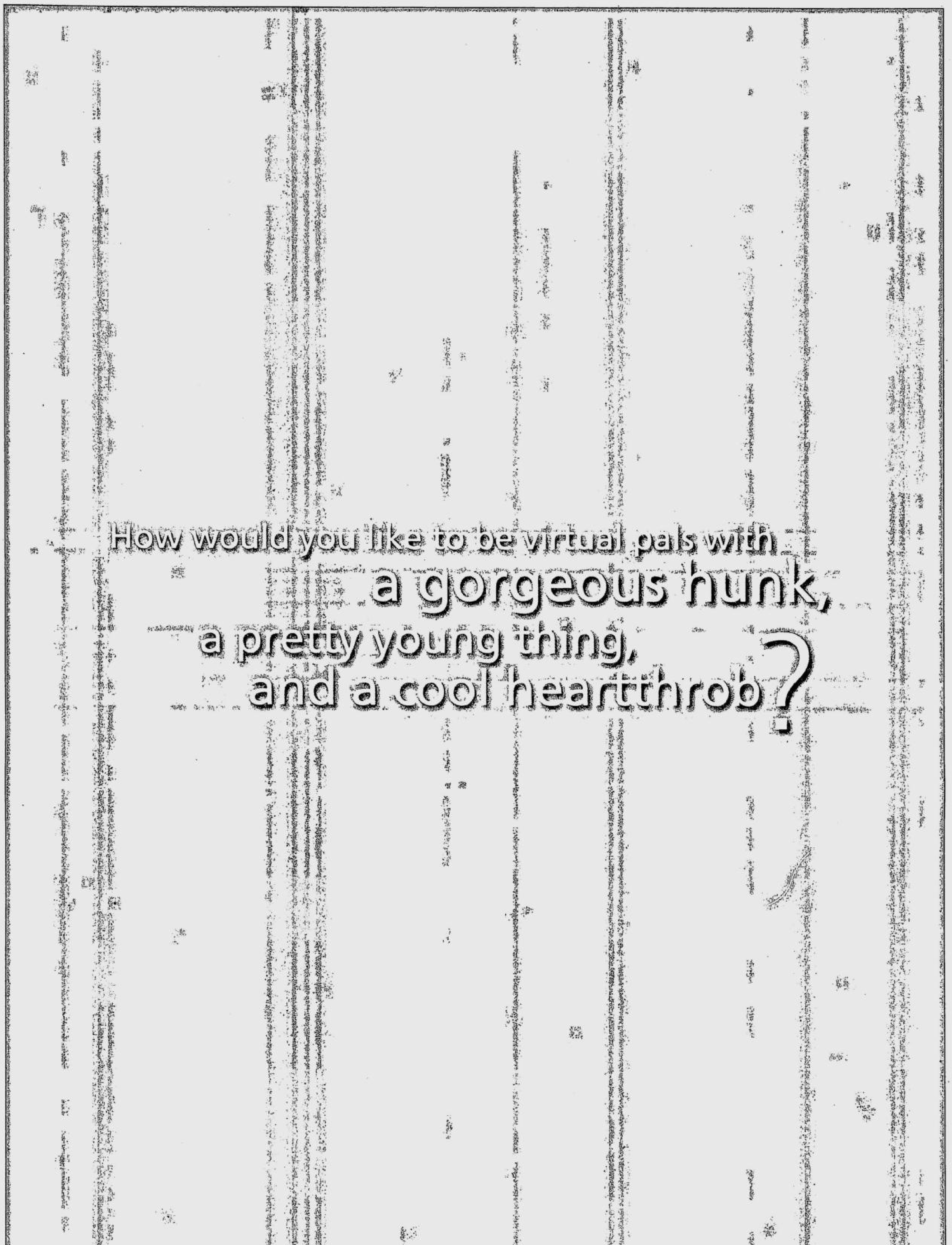
But the traffic helicopter's cameras do record other things that can be of better use, like fires. This early-warning capability should be of help to firemen, to guide them faster to the scenes of conflagrations.

Above all, the traffic helicopter's shots provide horrible evidence of just how bad air pollution has become over Metro Manila!

Thick smog

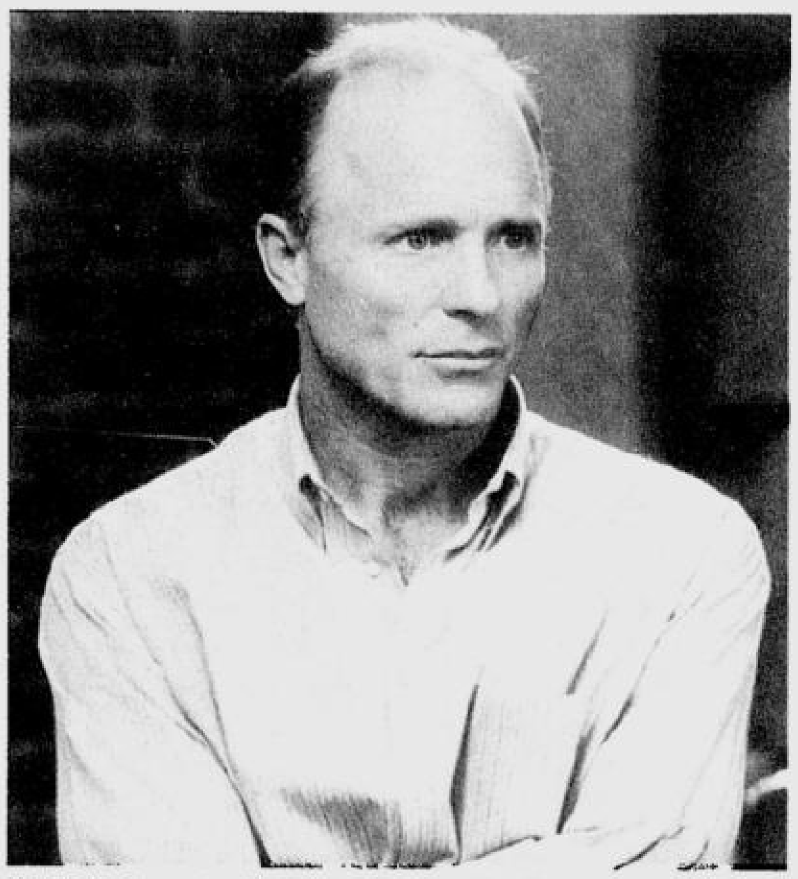
Sometimes, the cars and roads beneath can hardly be seen due to the thick smog that blankets the metropolis early in the day, specially in areas where factories send up their deadly plumes of smoke.

Parents and health officials should take these shots of visual pollution as danger signs that the city is being choked, if not to death, then to eventual illness, by the fetid air we breathe, and pressure the government to take drastic steps to remedy the dire situation, before things go from worse to worst.



How would you like to be virtual pals with
a gorgeous hunk,
a pretty young thing,
and a cool heartthrob?

Ed Harris portrays famous artist in new film



HARRIS. A constant battle to complete the film on time.

By Anthony Breznican

LOS ANGELES—Jackson Pollock discovered his talent by gazing at a blank canvas and capturing beauty in a spattering of color. While trying to tell the artist's story on film, a despairing Ed Harris found inspiration when he sat on a New York City curb.

Complicated scene

On only the second day of shooting, the actor and first-time director had fallen behind schedule while trying to film a complicated scene on a busy street.

"We had to make a decision about what we weren't going to get that day and what we were never going to get—after working on the script for eight years," said Harris.

The 50-year-old actor, known for playing agonized tough guys in blockbusters like "The Abyss," "Apollo 13" and "The Rock," developed a passion for Pollock's story after reading a biography of the artist in 1986.

The movie Harris had in mind leaned more toward his work in smaller, independent movies like "The Third Miracle" or "Glengarry Glen Ross," and he spent nearly 15 years working toward the day when his movie would be complete.

That troubled day on the street was a turning point.

"I sat on the curb and thought, 'This is impossible,'' Harris recalled. "I was telling myself, 'This is just not gonna happen. There's no way we're going to be able to pull this off."

Similar pose

Harris describes that moment sitting in a similar pose—crouched at the edge of his seat, hands clasped prayerlike above his knees, his face resting on the fingertips.

"I just kind of just sat there and ... just wept for a while," he added with a laugh. "I said to myself, 'What are you doing here? You can sit up and get the shot. Just do what your gotta do.'"

Work continued, and Harris got what he needed that day even if he didn't get everything he wanted.

"It was moment-to-moment, kind of gut-check survival time for months," he said. "Ultimately, it was very, very invigorating and challenging. And boy, it really keeps you alive, I'll tell you that much."

As the lead actor, director and producer, he said, it was a constant battle to complete the film on time, within the budget and in a manner that did justice to the subject.

"Ed is very serious. He's very focused. He's very dedicated and intense," said "Pollock" costar Marcia Gay Harden, who played the artist's wife, Lee Krasner. "Making this movie was a lot of stress for him. The road was a little bouncier at times because it was his first time as a director."

Progress

The movie chronicles Pollock's progress from a Depression-era painter living off a federally funded workfare program, to the peak of his career as America's first internationally lauded abstract impressionist.

Pollock is best known for his so-called "drip paintings," huge canvases covered with multicolored splashes and drops of paint. Some art aficionados sneered—he became the target of "my-kid-could-have-done-that" criticism.

"The bottom line was that he was a creative individual who really fought a lot of his own obstacles and pressures to come up with another way of painting and a way of expressing himself that was truly original," Harris said. "I think, in its best sense, it was very pure. And it happened to revolutionize modern art."

Pollock eventually found fortune and acclaim through the influence of art critic Clement Greenberg (played by Jeffrey Tambor) and collector Peggy Guggenheim (played by Harris's wife, Amy Madigan.)

Fragile ego

The artist suffered from a painfully fragile ego that led to alcoholism and temperamental outbursts. He died in 1956 in an auto accident while driving drunk down a country road.

"This is not a fictional character," Harris said. "He doesn't exist in a book, he existed on the planet, you know? He woke up every morning, he faced what he had to face and went out to his studio to paint."

Harris next appears as a German major in the World War II drama "Enemy at the Gates," and is shooting the drama "The Hours" with Meryl Streep.

AP

Pioneer baker opens a house of sweets

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

BAKERIES and pastry shops are blossoming all over the country. Some have delicious products to sell while many others would be better off operating a "*talyer*." Everywhere you go, you will see a Goldilocks or Red Ribbon outlet. Apart from the appealing taste of their products, they also offer of affordable prices. The presence of these establishments all over speaks of its success. There are a few others that have delicious products but are still in the "departure" area of success.

Wedding cakes

My daily route is a drive along Katipunan. One of the new bakeshops that has caught my attention is Dexter's. A fairly new place, it has a variety of wedding cakes on display. On my way home one day, I dropped by to check out their products. I learned that Dexter is named after one of the pioneer bakers in the country, Dexter Rebolledo.

Dexter started as a supplier of Christmas décor for Botica Boie in Escolta. He was also an English teacher in Letran, San Beda and other schools. Because he loved to bake, he continuously read baking books and started experimenting on his hidden love. His passion for the craft landed him in a baking school where he crossed paths with famous bake shops. They say some of those who came across his school were bakers from Goldilocks and Joni's. He was also involved in setting up bakeries that have become successful. It is no wonder his goodies are also delicious.

It wasn't long before Dexter started his own bakeshop and the rest is history. Chef Dexter has passed on the business to his wife and children. Josefina heads the over all operations while son Roland handles the dining room (they serve pastas and main meals). His experience was fencing with pans in the kitchens of the Diamond hotel. Raymond is on top of operations for wedding cakes which happens to be their specialty. A sister, Susan Reyes handles their branch at the Fiesta Carnival Arcade. The assembly room of these gigantic cakes is quite impressive. They have classy and beautiful designs. I'm sure prospective couples will find something that'll suit their wedding motif and budget.

Small items

I shopped for a lot of small items in their display. I got some *sans rival*, cream puff, Spanish bread, *brazo de Mercedes*, brownies, *ensaymada*, cinnamon roll, cheese cakes and many others. They were delicious. I was particularly impressed with their *brazo*, the *sans rival*, carrot cake and Spanish bread. I learned their specialty is a plain chicken pie which is also delicious. I can't wait for my "chicken pie addict" dad to try this version. I'm sure he'll love it. The best part is that the prices are extremely affordable.

Here's a place that just opened along Katipunan that's just waiting for it's turn on the run way of success. The items are yummy, the prices are reasonable and the owners humble in spite of their talent.

The place comes highly recommended. Check out the place and decide which among the many items appeals to you.

Happy eating!

Dexter's Bake Shop is at 146 Katipunan ave., Tel. 912-0311. Coming from White Plains going towards Santolan, the place is on your right side after Bruno's barber shop and Ralph's liquor store. They also have a branch at the Fiesta Carnival Arcade Tel. 911-2742, 439-6455.

It doesn't cost a thing to love Jennifer Lopez

By Ricky T. Gallardo

(Conclusion)

BUT with the turn of events involving Combs, Jennifer Lopez might have to wait a little longer. Love hasn't been on her side lately. If press reports are anything to go by, it was Mr. Puffy who ended the relationship *exactomundo* on Feb. 14. But, in Hong Kong, Lopez showed barely a tingle of the heartache she must have felt a week ago.

Perception

Lopez didn't affirm the public perception of her break-up. "I don't keep up with everything in media because there are a lot of misconceptions and stuff that's not always true. I try not to get into all that," she said.

And she wasn't giving away anything either on the latest buzz about her and dancer Chris Judd, whom she allegedly got close to during the filming of her latest music video, "Love Don't Cost a Thing."

Although her Asian fans didn't hear her sing, Lopez tried her best to answer every question thrown at her, although not necessarily giving the answers we wanted everytime.

We liked her statement on work, though and how she handles success: "The more success you have, the more you realize what the more important things are."

She won't deny that she enjoys a lot more material things now, but she attributes that to growing up "without a damn thing."

"So, to be able to buy stuff I like is incredible, and to get something for my mom or dad is the best! You can never replace the relationship you have with your mother with a new car, and you can't take the fur coat to bed with you at night, because that's just not what life is!"

LOPEZ. Still the same girl underneath.

Rookie

Things have changed a lot for J. Lo, but despite her confirmed status as an international superstar and sex symbol, she occasionally still feels like a rookie.

"I am the girl who grew up in the Bronx and had a lot of dreams. I still feel like the same kind of girl. That's why I enjoy everything, because I'm still the same girl underneath, I am regular, I am," she chuckles, "I'm normal!"

Someone then asked if her girl-next-door image was in conflict with many controversies about her alleged divaesque extravagance during trips abroad, like demands for quality sheets, a black Mercedes with a male chauffeur and a manicurist on board, and her huge entourage. She heaved a sigh and said, "The girl next door has grown."

Lopez also dodged what is perhaps the greatest public misconception about her: "Have you or will you ever insure any part of your body?" someone from Reuters asked. Lopez broke into a wide grin while we gasped at the question. The claim is she had her body insured for a whopping $1 billion!

'Not true. Sorry. You know, I've heard that big rumor and saved the newspaper to show my kids one day," she said.

Tour

For now, J. Lo's Asian fans will have to wait a little longer to see her perform. She flew to Sydney after Hong Kong and said she's planning a tour starting Aug. 15, but this will cover only the United States and Canada.

"We don't have definite plans to travel, but I want to." We reminded her to include the Philippines in her next Asian itinerary and she smiled, "I'd love to!"

Full houses, protests greet Bollywood blockbuster

By Maria Abraham

BOMBAY—A star-studded film which has been dogged by controversy over its financing opened in theatres across India on Friday despite scattered protests by right-wing Hindu activists.

Heavy advance bookings for "Chori Chori Chupke Chupke" (Stealthily, Secretly) meant there were full houses across Bombay, the center of India's Bollywood film industry.

Night shows

"All the shows are full till Tuesday and the night shows have been booked in advance till next Friday," an official at the Eros Theatre in swanky south Bombay told Reuters.

The release, originally scheduled for December, was delayed after police arrested producer Nazim Rizvi and seized the film on suspicion it was funded by gangsters.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, or World Hindu Council, and the Bajrang Dal, another radical Hindu organisation, have called for a boycott of "Chori Chori Chupke Chupke."

They say watching the movie would amount to supporting Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence, and allege that India's gangland bosses enjoy the support of Islamabad's secret service.

"Our activists will ask the theatre manager not to screen the film," Vishwa Hindu Parishad activist Jagdish Khare told Reuters, adding that a group of his colleagues had gone to a theatre screening the film in a Bombay suburb.

Outskirts

A theatre in Thane, a major industrial city on the outskirts of Bombay, was forced to cancel the film's opening on Friday.

"A mob of around 300 to 400 people came and shouted that the film should not be shown," A.N. Satam, manager of the Malhar theatre, said. "We did not have enough police protection so we cancelled all the shows today."

In the capital New Delhi a small group of activists from the youth wing of the Hindu hardline party Shiv Sena demonstrated outside a theatre, but police arrested them within minutes.

Police in the central city of Bhopal said a group of about 50 Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena activists pelted two cinema halls with stones and garbage before being taken into custody.

Prince Jain, manager of Bhopal's Muskaan theatre, said there was no damage to the cinema hall and no one was hurt but the protest delayed the screening by 15 minutes.

Undeterred

Undeterred by the arrests, local Shiv Sena spokesman Pramod Modi told Reuters his party workers would continue to oppose the screening of the movie by staging sit-ins and rallies and tearing up posters advertising the film.

Bhopal District Superintendent of Police Arun Pratap Singh said security had been stepped up in and around the theatres.

Bombay's Eros Theatre said it, too, was ready for trouble.

"We got threatening calls warning us not to screen the film. We're getting police protection," the official said. "Police will sit inside the theatre during the show for the next three days."

"Chori Chori Chupke Chupke" sank deep into controversy two months ago when its high-profile financier, diamond merchant Bharat Shah, was arrested on allegations of links with the underworld that plagues India's commercial capital.

Detained

Shah and Rizvi were detained under laws that deal with organised crime. Both deny any wrongdoing.

The threats of disruption appeared not to have deterred movie-lovers as they flocked to see hearthrob Salman Khan star in the tale of a love triangle with Rani Mukherji and Preity Zinta.

"I'm a big, big fan of Salman Khan. I'm not bothered about any controversy," said a college student waiting impatiently outside a cinema with her friends.

Initial reactions seemed positive.

"The film is very good. We all liked it," said Varsha Shah, who saw the first showing of the film with her two daughters.

Bombay churns out one Hindi film every two days on average, most of them melodramas packed with song-and-dance routines. ***(Additional reporting by S. Sanjay in Bhopal) Reuters***

Ushers' role in the theatergoing experience

By Leia Torre

WHERE there's a theater, there's a show, and where there's a show, they are there—the ushers are those young men and women dressed in black, who frequently bear the brunt of irate theatergoers' temper tantrums.

Best seats

Some people consider them a nuisance, preventing them from taking the best seats in the house—unless you deserve to be there, and shining flashlights down the aisles to guide the latecomers. Most of us do not realize that it is the latecomers' fault, and not the usher's.

Although being an usher is hard work, it does have its rewards, but money is the least of them. The pay is minimal, so they frequently try to find things that make ushering worthwhile. Here are some examples of the lighter moments of the ushering business:

"Being an usher requires running around the theater and standing for most of the show. You get used to answering questions, guiding people to their seats, and being on the alert for members of the audience who violate the house rules. One of the most frequently-asked questions concerns the location of the washroom.

"The 'Rama at Sita' run last December 1999 at the UP Theater was one of the most challenging to handle, in terms of the sheer number of the crowd. This was especially true during the later shows, which were frequently overbooked.

"During the intermission of one performance, I was busy fetching monoblock chairs from backstage for those audience members who did not have seats. When we weren't fetching chairs, we were occupied with selling souvenir programs.

Directions

"I was approached by this charming, good-looking guy who asked me for directions to the men's washroom. As I was so harried at the time, I gave him the automatic answer and directed him to the washroom located in the theater lobby. It was not until the show resumed that I realized that he was a very famous star. We were instructed to direct celebrities to the backstage washrooms in order to avoid their being mobbed by overeager fans—that's exactly what happened to that guy!"

Mae, 22: "The elephant. That walking prop of the 'Rama at Sita' musical was the source of a lot of funny memories connected to that play. The entrance of the elephant elicited a variety of reactions from the audience—some oohed and aahed but stayed in their seats, while others insisted on patting and stroking the elephant.

"One time, an overeager enthusiast even went as far as to step into the aisle in front of the elephant because he 'wanted to see a live elephant up close.' That got a lot of laughter from us, considering that the play was nearing the end of its run and rumors about the inclusion of a real elephant in the play were as good as forgotten.

Too heavy

"This person, however, refused to believe what we said until we told him that it could not possibly be a live elephant because it would emit a disagreeable odor if it should perform its natural biological functions in the middle of the play, and it would be too heavy for the ramps. After a lot of convincing on our part, he finally decide to believe us and return to his seat." Belle, 20: "Some people I know think that ushering involves nothing more than standing and directing people to their respective seats. It is not until we look behind the ready smile and remember that they are responsible for our being able to sit in the seats we've paid for that we can appreciate how much work is involved in 'putting people in their places.'

"Without ushers, theatergoing could end up in pocket skirmishes as people fight over seats. Not only the members of the audience would be inconvenienced or distracted, but also the performers onstage, who deserve the audience's full, absorbed attention. That's what ushers strive to give them. So you see, we're an essential part of the theater experience, too."

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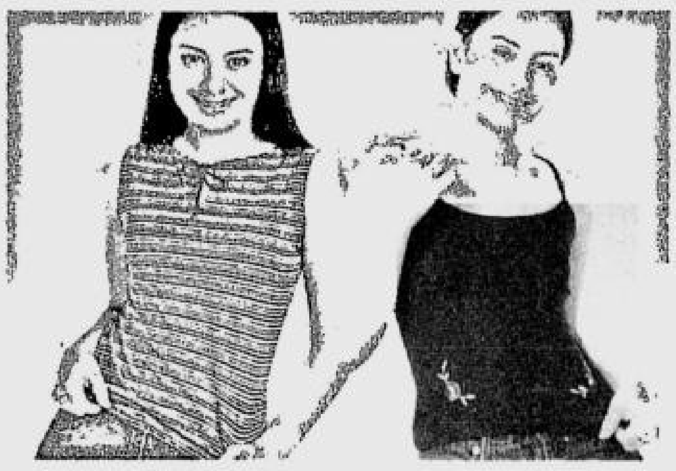

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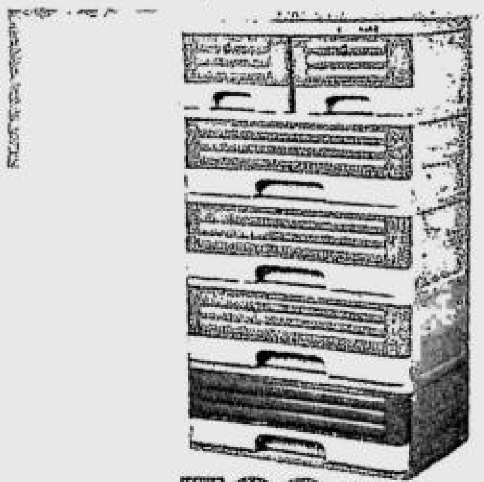

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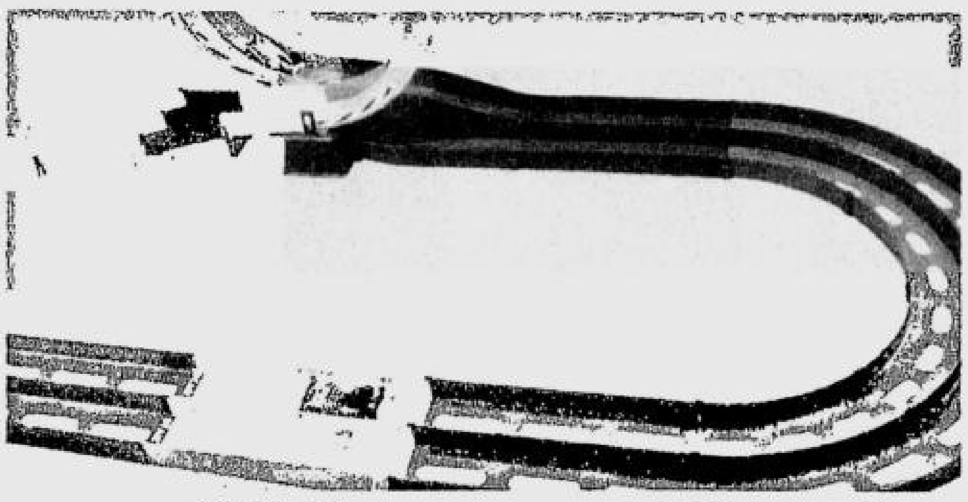

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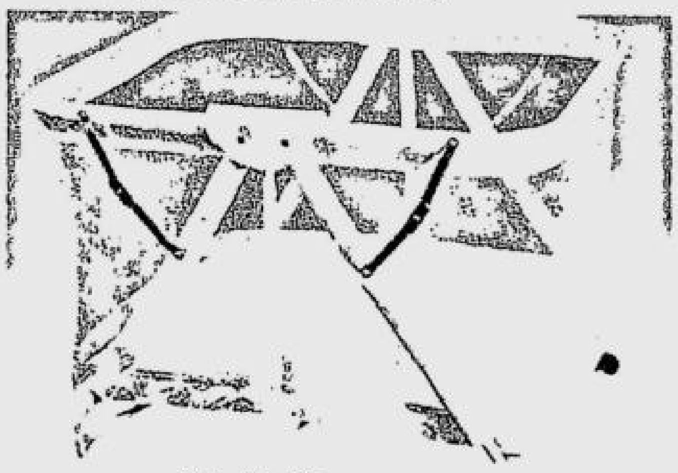

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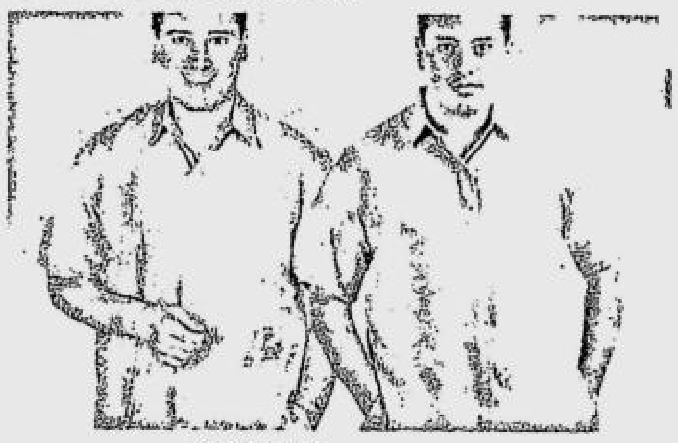

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Saturday SPECIAL

Napster to pull plug on copyrighted music

By Michael Kahn

SAN FRANCISCO—Napster Inc., facing a corporate death sentence at the hands of a federal judge, bought itself a brief reprieve on Friday by promising to block users from accessing some one million music files covered by recording industry copyrights.

Swan song

Some industry analysts said, however, that the online music song-swap service may still be singing its swan song.

Napster's last-ditch effort to conform with copyright law came as U.S. District Judge Marilyn Hall Patel held a hearing on how to formulate an injunction which fans fear could put the it out of business.

Patel ended the hearing with a promise to draft an injunction order "that is workable and makes sense" — but gave no indication when she might issue it. Legal observers do not expect a lengthy wait.

Meanwhile, Napster's vow to filter out copyrighted music files starting this weekend sparked cries of protest from users, who have made the service wildly popular around the world by trading everything from Chinese pop songs to Beethoven symphonies compressed into handy MP3 computer files.

"Oh my God. I'd better finish downloading," said one Napster devotee scrambling to grab as much music as possible before the screening system takes effect.

Attorney

Napster's lead attorney, David Boies, said the new copyright protection system should allow the company to stay in business — although many industry analysts questioned whether Napster would still have the same appeal if it no longer offers the world's top pop hits for free.

"I think Napster will still be the best music service out there, (but) it will not be the same," Boies said.

Napster's offer came amid some two hours of argument from its lawyers and representatives of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), which has sued the Internet upstart on charges of facilitating widespread music piracy.

Industry analysts said while Napster's move may have won it more time to negotiate with the recording industry, it did not mark a sure path to survival for the company.

Although the two sides have scheduled more mediation next week, Napster's decision to play by recording industry rules could weaken its overall negotiating position while driving once-loyal users to other services, they said.

"I'm sure that Napster usage will be very high this weekend and it will be interesting to see the cat-and-mouse games as users try to get around the blocking schemes," said Malcolm Maclachlan, analyst with technology tracking firm International Data Corp. "The main effect will be to grow usage on other peer-to-peer networks like Aimster and Gnutella."

Quick injunction

Ric Dube, an analyst with Webnoize, said the recording industry would likely continue to press for a quick injunction to make sure Napster agrees to all of its terms.

"Once the injunction is in place, these two sides could come together for a negotiation," said Dube. "Napster hasn't said uncle yet and the record companies need to hear before entering any discussions."

The court battle over Napster's future – involving everyone from the company's youthful founder to major rock stars and one of the most famous lawyers in the country — is a defining case for copyrights in cyberspace and could affect the way books, movies and all entertainment will be distributed online for years to come.

At Friday's hearing, Napster's lawyers said the company was racing to perfect new software to filter out copyrighted material and hoped to reach agreement soon with the recording industry on how to identify such material.

"We have come considerably closer together on the issue of an injunction," said Boies, who represented the Justice Department in its antitrust suit against Microsoft.

Boies said Napster would begin policing itself by blocking access to some one million files of copyrighted music over the weekend, with more to come.

Files

Most of activity on Napster involves the unauthorized trade of copyrighted material. But Napster says it is unable to identify which files are copyrighted and which are not, putting the onus on the RIAA to provide lists of material it believes represent copyright infringement.

Lawyers for the recording industry, joined in court Friday by lawyers representing artists Metallica and Dr. Dre, said they had already submitted a list of some 5,600 song titles — each of which could account for a vast number of separate files on the Napster system — to be blocked.

While the RIAA's legal team pointed out that serious questions remained about how the new screening process would work, RIAA President Hilary Rosen had some rare words of praise for the online company, saying it was the first time Napster had sought to obey existing

NAPSTER/p.H3

Trio still singing for peace after four decades

HONG KONG—Legendary folk music pioneers Peter, Paul & Mary have used music to advocate for human rights and peace since the 1960s.

Four decades on, they are still fighting an uphill battle.

Pain

"We're seeing a lot of pain, war, injury of one person to another in the world," said Peter Yarrow, a member of the group.

"I think we will continue to sing and to be advocates through our music of the things that we cherish most."

He was speaking at a news conference to promote the group's maiden performances in Hong Kong from Friday to Sunday.

Yarrow, Paul Stookey and Mary Travers formed the trio in 1961, and shot to instant fame, becoming the world's most popular folk music group.

Currently, the group is participating in a project called 'Operation Respect, Don't Laugh At Me'—a school curriculum aimed to help children learn ways of sharing and interacting.

As part of the project, the trio has recorded a song, "Don't Laugh At Me," which advocates sympathy for children.

Schools

To improve the world, "you have to start with children really, in their lives, in their schools," Yarrow said.

"And we hope all three of us that all the advocacies that we've been part of will link once again our music and our spirits together in an effort to address the problems in this world."

The group is also planning a new album.

"We have about 20 songs that we could record," Yarrow said, adding that some of them could be included on a planned compilation album "that represents our own musical history." *Reuters*

PAUL Stokey, Mary Travers and Peter Yarrow during their visit to the Philippines in 1987.

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Stars who lived happily ever after

JAMES Stewart and his bride Gloria Maclean leave the church after their wedding ceremony in 1949.

By Behn Cervantes

(Conclusion)

IF at first the stars didn't succeed at marriage, trying obviously was not such a bad idea. Indeed, Hollywood legends tried and tried and tried—again!

Many romances

Successful marriages that came after a few failures include that of lanky Gregory Peck and his *tres chic* French wife Veronique, a correspondent who forever settled his wandering eyes. Peck's many romances included one with the young Ingrid Bergman when they made the classic psychological drama "Spellbound" for Alfred Hitchcock in 1945.

Another successful "marriage repeater" is "Spartacus" star and producer Kirk Douglas. He divorced Michael's mom but is now blissfully in the arms of his last wife, a pillar of strength during his illness ridden days this past decade.

In his autobiography, he bragged about his many romances, which included the likes of feline-eyed beauty Gene Tierney (who married Oleg Cassini, divorced him, romanced Aly Kahn, was rejected and died an unhappy woman, thus making good copy for the television series "Hollywood Scandals").

While these big stars mellowed and solved their marital problems, quietly working together as one of the most illustrious of America's acting couples were Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy. Their stage and film careers lasted decades with their talents and teamwork turning impeccable with age, practice and dedication.

TANDY AND CRONYN. Sturdy relationship.

They were the primary attraction of the Tyrone Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. Their partnership as actors improved by working and supporting each other. Their relationship as man and wife remained sturdy, too.

Widower

When Tandy passed away soon after she won a Best Actress Academy Award for "Driving Miss Daisy," Hume was cast as a widower, recollecting his long happy life, in a poignant film of loneliness and old age aptly titled "Alone."

Lanky James Stewart was also around the Hollywood romantic scene for many years. He didn't seem to figure out the marital game until he met Gloria Maclean, a victim of a couple of divorces herself. He was already in his 40s, and was ready to settle down to a quiet married life and indeed he did with Gloria. Stewart lost his partner a few years ago and is said to be still mourning her demise.

Ronald Reagan divorced Academy Award-winning actress Jane Wyman, who was bored with his political ambitions. After nursing a broken heart, he soon remarried and chose starlet Nancy Davies as his second wife. Not long after, she became the First Lady of the most powerful country in the world. Today, ex-president Reagan suffers from Alzeimer's Disease and is virtually helpless. But the faithful Nancy nurses her Ron with the same dedication she gave her roles as an actress, governor's wife and First Lady of the USA.

Lasting relationships

The marital tales of the Reagans, Stewarts and Cronyns are love stories that should, in time, hit the big screen or be chronicled in a some sweet Hollywood television specials. Indeed, such fine stories of lasting relationships surprise even the most blasé of movie fans.

Hollywood springs other surprises: For example, a Hollywood marriage that continues to be fodder for gossip was the unusual union of Charles Laughton and Elsa Lanchester, serious thespians both. It even crossed oceans and was transplanted from foggy London to sunny California. Despite its unconventional arrangement, the marriage lasted because the couple loved and cared for each other.

Laughton, Academy Award winner for Alexander Korda's "The Private Life of King Henry VIII," married Lanchester, a fine character actress, in 1929 although the actor was a well-known homosexual.

At that time, that sexual predilection was still considered an abomination, so steeped Victorian morality were England and the States in those days.

Today, their marriage would best be described as an "open" one.

Their relationship was founded on artistic respect for each other's apparent talents, so it remained affectionate and steady throughout the many years they faithfully catered to each other's needs, while handsome and beautiful stars with great frustration tried to figure out how to make their own marriages work!

Despite its unconventional arrangement, the union weathered time and problems while thousands of heterosexual Hollywood marriages met their inevitable fate in divorce courts.

'The Quiet American' is a labor of love

By Sarah Toms

HO CHI MINH CITY—Australian film director Phillip Noyce describes his new adaptation of Graham Greene's "The Quiet American" as a labor of love on both sides of the camera that still carries a vital message today.

Classic tale

Speaking on location in Ho Chi Minh City after the opening of filming in Vietnam, Noyce said Greene's classic tale of murder, love and political intrigue had caught the imagination of all those involved in the project.

"For both actors—Michael Caine and Brendan Fraser—they are doing this as a labor of love, as are most of us who are making the movie—it's not for the money," he told Reuters.

"It's a film that I felt was crying out to be made because of its relevance to today and yesterday and it's a film that both those actors agreed needed to made."

Greene's 1955 book, based on his experiences as a journalist covering the dying days of French colonial rule in Vietnam, is hailed as a masterpiece for its uncanny prediction of perils of US intervention in Indochina.

Sir Michael Caine plays Greene's narrator, opium addicted British journalist Thomas Fowler, while Fraser portrays CIA agent Alden Pyle, the idealistic "Quiet American" of the title.

Holiday

Noyce, whose previous credits include "The Bone Collector," "Patriot Games" and "The Saint" said he re-read the book during a holiday in Vietnam with his family in 1995.

"Graham Greene... when he wrote the book was able to see into the future, was able to tell us what was going to happen.

"So when I read the book in Vietnam and having met a lot of Vietnamese who had fought in both wars—the war against the French and the war against the Americans—I realized this really was an important film about that time, but also about this time," Noyce said.

"Because the question that the film asks is a question that comes up all the time for politicians, which is: whether the means justify the ends... Do you save more people by action than by inaction? That's a question that we're faced with constantly."

"To act or not to act, to be or not to be—it's also a question that Shakespeare confronted in his famous play "Hamlet." And so it's a very vital question for the whole world now, a vital question for American politicians and it's going to increasingly become the question.

"Do you meddle in other people's affairs for what you estimate will be the good of that country and the whole world, do you kill innocents to save the future?"

Dilemma

He said this dilemma applied as much to US policy towards countries such as Iraq or Yugoslavia in the modern era as it did to Indochina in Greene's day.

"All we know in the case of Vietnam is that millions and millions of people were killed in prosecuting the idea that whatever the means, they are justified by the ends.

"Of course, America lost that war, so you could say that the means didn't justify the ends."

Noyce said his version of "The Quiet American" did not take sides. "We leave that for the audience to make up their minds."

He described the character of Pyle as "the classic Cold War warrior," "a man of utterly good intentions" imbued with an evangelistic zeal to save the world from communism.

"For some he will be at the end of the movie the hero he is at the beginning, for others he may be a villain. And the same with Thomas Fowler, who having witnessed the carnage, the death and the destruction and the agony... decides to act, to take action to stop the killing."

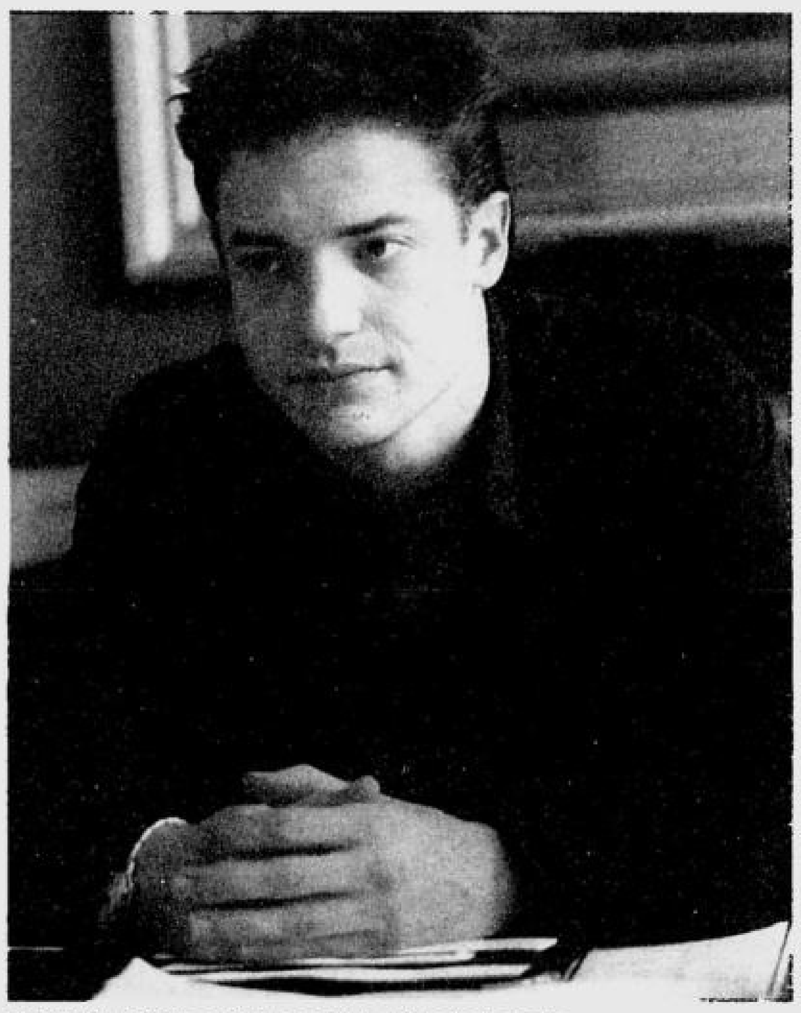
Murder mystery

Despite the weighty subject matter, Noyce said his film was essentially first a murder mystery and a love story, then a political thriller.

"The political implications of the story are unavoidable, but really they are the subtext.

"Hopefully the audience will enjoy the movie on the first two levels and the political questions will be what we call in the movies 'refrigerator questions'—the questions the audience ask when they get home, they open the refrigerator, they reach for a beer and they say: 'Oh! That's what's it was about!"

Reuters



FRASER. Plays a CIA agent in his latest movie.

Political jingles ring the voting public's bells

By Veron Dionisio

(Conclusion)

THIS is the main reason, he says, why jingles utilize current hits because it shortens the process of creating awareness. "The melody is already familiar so the listeners can concentrate more on the lyrics, which highlight the salient points of the candidates political profile," explains Angelo.

While Vehnee and Angelo are open to the idea of writing jingles for candidates they don't really believe in, Mel Villena, thinks otherwise. "It should be somebody I would most likely to endorse or vote for," says Mel.

Dancing and singing to election jingles is quite a unique Philippine experience. Why is this so? "Filipinos are very musically-inclined. We can take any situation if it's done 'musically.' *Mas natatanggap at naiintindihan natin ang sitwasyon kapag may halong musika.* Look what happened at Edsa, music played a dominant role there. I guess, *masyado tayong* show biz-oriented. *Sabi nga ng isang* foreigner, in every household in the Philippines, there is at least one singer," Mel shares.

Rich, musical culture

Angelo agrees that we indeed have a rich culture of music. And Jimmy Borja, another noted composer believes that Filipinos' natural love for music makes elections here assume a different atmosphere and dimension. "I was in the States last year, and there was no fanfare at all. Unlike here, where elections are so festive!" he observes.

SATURNO. Open to writing jingles for candidates he doesn't believe in.

Jimmy's creative process starts by researching on the candidate's background. "I look into the candidates' orientation, the positions he or she has held in the past, so that what we write will be close to the truth, and the jingle will fit the candidates' political personality," he says.

In 1995, Jimmy wrote a jingle for Cong. Dante Liban. "In writing jingles we play with words. For instance Liban rhymes with *kaibigan.* So in the jingle, *kaibigan* was the key word and therefore, it was repeatedly mentioned," recalls Jimmy.

Original composition

While most candidates would prefer adaptations of popular songs or current hits, the jingle for Liban was an original composition. "But those who prefer originals are in the minority. Using the melody of current hits creates instant recall so most prefer them," he says.

A jingle for an election campaign, Jimmy says, must be catchy, lively and upbeat.

It helps if he believes in the candidate's political beliefs and commitment. "We're more inspired if we can identify with what he stands for, and believe in the causes and programs he is espousing. You feel you're not doing it as a work. Somehow you feel that it's a political exercise *na rin,*" says Jimmy.

Would he write a jingle for a candidate he doesn't really believe in? "It may sound hypocritical but at this point, *puwede na sigurong makatanggi,*" replies Jimmy.

SNEAK PREVIEW

'The Gospel According to Philip K. Dick'

By Anthony Breznican

LOS ANGELES — Philip K. Dick was "wacko," "compulsive" and "weird"—and that's according to the people who liked him.

During the 1950s and '60s, the late science fiction writer penned dozens of novels and short stories that appeared on dime-store shelves and in pulp magazines.

Documentary

The documentary "The Gospel According to Philip K. Dick" chronicles his later years when he suffered from debilitating depression and drug addiction.

The documentary should be titled "The Madness of Philip K. Dick."

Although the movie was made by fans hoping to increase awareness of the author (whom they affectionately call PKD), "Gospel" ignores those decades when he was at his most creative.

Mainstream audiences know Dick through some of the movies inspired by his work, such as "Blade Runner," "Total Recall" and the upcoming Tom Cruise thriller "Minority Report."

A contemporary of Ray Bradbury, Dick took a philosophical approach to his world of spacecrafts, androids and technology to question reality, humanity and logic.

Drug addiction

Dick died in 1982 shortly before the release of "Blade Runner," and for nearly 10 years before, he battled drug addiction, depression and the seemingly mad ramblings of his mind.

Filmmakers Mark Steensland and Andy Massagi use no film footage or photographs of Dick. So the audience doesn't get to see what the author really looked like, but they do, believe it or not, get an animated Philip K. Dick.

This cartoon speaks courtesy of old audiotape interviews about subjects such as suicide, mind-swapping and his life's work.

"I've learned that I don't understand the human brain," the animated PKD says.

It's a novel effect, especially in a documentary about a man who was obsessed with the idea of identity.

Fellow sci-fi scribes Robert Anton Wilson and Ray Nelson join those discussing the later years of Dick's life, which he claimed included a mysterious safecracking at his home, a suicide attempt, run-ins with gangsters and finally a visit from God.

Speculation

Dick's friends clearly love a good conspiracy, and the break-in provides them with ample room for speculation. (Dick once theorized that he cracked the safe himself and was programmed by the KGB to forget it.)

His friends are all pretty sure his safe was cracked because it was filled with heroin.

At the height of his self-medication, Dick told friends that he had a spiritual experience with God that came through a mysterious "pink beam."

Following this epiphany, Dick all but stopped writing fiction, and began writing an 8,000-page exegesis of his mystical experience to prove it actually happened—both to himself and his friends.

"You began to suspect there was some kind of guiding intelligence behind this odd phenomena, even if that guiding intelligence was Phil's," Dick biographer D. Scott Apel says.

"The Gospel According to Philip K. Dick," a First Run Features release, runs 80 minutes. *AP*

BINOCHE. Nominee for Best Actress for her performance in "Chocolat"

'Chocolat': Vying for the Oscars

AWARD winning topbill "Chocolat." Juliette Binoche, Oscar's Best Actress awardee for her role in "The English Patient," leads the cast of this comic fable about how the liberating powers of the senses can release a town from a very rigid and structured life to one that is punctuated by an outburst of emotion.

Single mother

In "Chocolat," Binoche plays Vianne Rocher, a single mother and a free-spirited wanderer. With her daughter in tow, her travels take her to Lansquenet, a tranquil, laid-back and humorless little French town, ruled by a certain Comte de Reynaud played by Alfred Molina ("Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Magnolia"). Vianne opens a chocolate shop overflowing with delectable concoctions, which become a catalyst for change in Lansquenet. What ensues is a confrontation between those who just recently discovered their passions and desires in life and those who wish to suppress it.

Eccentric town figure

Binoche is joined by Judi Dench, Oscar's Best Supporting Actress for her role as Queen Elizabeth in "Shakespeare in Love." Dench plays Armande, an eccentric, elder town figure with a crabby sense of independence but coupled with a good sense of humor. She is first to accept Vianne because she somehow sees in Vianne a reflection of her old self. She has an estranged relationship with her daughter Caroline, played by Carrie-Anne Moss ("Matrix").

Unusual characters

Lasse Hallstrom whose direction for "The Cider House Rules" was nominated in the Oscars, directs this compelling humane story of unusual characters and situations, a touch for which he is known. Prior to "The Cider House Rules," he wrote and directed "My Life as a Dog," a film about the adventures of a resilient 12-year old boy in an unconventional country village. Next, he directed "Once Around" with Holly Hunter as a repressed Boston woman who finds love with an obnoxious millionaire played by Richard Dreyfuss.

In 1993, he directed "What's Eating Gilbert Grape?" where Leonardo DiCaprio, as the autistic younger brother of Johnny Depp, was nominated in the Oscars for Best Supporting Actor. Hallstrom and Depp are reunited in "Chocolat" with the latter portraying Roux, a gypsy traveler who, like Vianne, blows into town and in her life rather unexpectedly.

"Chocolat" has received scores of nominations from different award giving bodies including five in the Oscars for Best Picture, Best Actress in a Lead Role, Best Actress in a Supporting Role, Best Original Score sad Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published.

Puffy Combs denies gun, bribery charges

By Samuel Maull

NEW YORK —Sean "Puffy" Combs took the witness stand to declare that he had never packed a weapon or offered a $50,000 bribe on the night three people were shot inside a Manhattan hip-hop club.

Bullets

The rap impresario, owner of a $300 million record label and clothing line, calmly told the jury Thursday last week that he believed the bullets ricocheting through Club New York on Dec. 27, 1999, were intended for him.

"I thought I was being shot at," said Combs, who was with fellow rapper The Notorious B.I.G. minutes before his murder in 1997. "My hands were up. ... Everybody started falling all over each other."

Facing up to 15 years in prison on weapons and bribery charges, Combs detailed the chaos after the shooting inside the club near Times Square as he headed for the exit with his then-girlfriend, the top-selling singer Jennifer Lopez.

Once Combs finished, the defense rested its case without calling Lopez to the stand. The pop diva never appeared in the courtroom.

Dressed in a dark, conservative suit as he has been each day of the trial, Combs exchanged bear hugs with his lawyers, Benjamin Brafman and Johnnie Cochran, after his testimony.

Mother

The rapper then walked into the audience to hug his mother and aunts before a fan presented him with a single red rose. In the gallery to provide support was rapper Dwight "Heavy D" Myers. *AP*

Napster . . .

(From page H1)

copyright laws.

"We made a lot of progress in court today," Rosen said. "It is important for me to give some credit to Napster today."

Napster's service has attracted about 60 million users who swap songs for free by trading MP3 files, a compression format that turns music on compact discs into small digital files.

The major recording companies, represented by the RIAA, first sued Napster in December 1999, claiming it aids copyright piracy and costs them billions of dollars in lost sales. Patel issued an injunction on July, but a federal appeals court two days later stayed her ruling pending review.

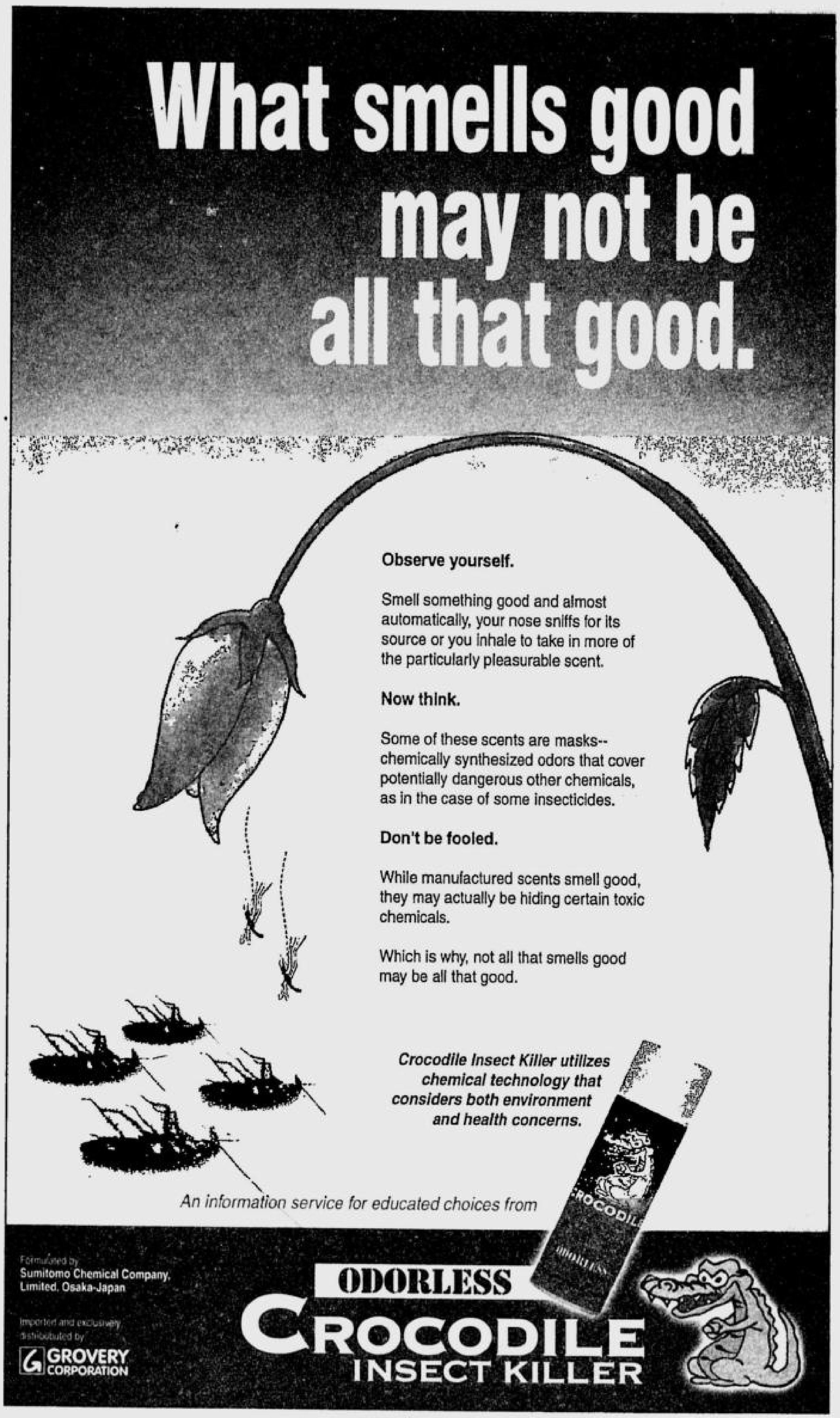
Panel

The embattled service was dealt a blow Feb. 12 when a three-judge panel from the appeals court ruled that Napster could be held liable for copyright infringement and that an injunction, which could essentially shut down Napster, was not only warranted but required.

In its ruling, the panel ordered Patel to require the record labels to identify which of their copyrights were infringed on Napster. Friday's hearing was called to hammer out the details of how such an order would be implemented.

In an effort to draw up a workable long-term business plan, Napster has embarked on a project with major investor Bertelsmann AG to develop a new, subscription version of its service, expected to be rolled out this summer.

The company has also offered the recording industry a five-year $1 billion deal to enable it to swap their music on a new secure service, but this has drawn poor reviews from its main opponents, which include Vivendi Universal's Universal Music, Sony Music, Warner Music and EMI Group Plc.(with additional reporting by Peter Henderson in San Francisco and Sue Zeidler in Los Angeles). *Reuters*



What smells good may not be all that good.

Observe yourself.

Smell something good and almost automatically, your nose sniffs for its source or you inhale to take in more of the particularly pleasurable scent.

Now think.

Some of these scents are masks--chemically synthesized odors that cover potentially dangerous other chemicals, as in the case of some insecticides.

Don't be fooled.

While manufactured scents smell good, they may actually be hiding certain toxic chemicals.

Which is why, not all that smells good may be all that good.

Crocodile Insect Killer utilizes chemical technology that considers both environment and health concerns.

An information service for educated choices from

Formulated by
Sumitomo Chemical Company, Limited, Osaka-Japan

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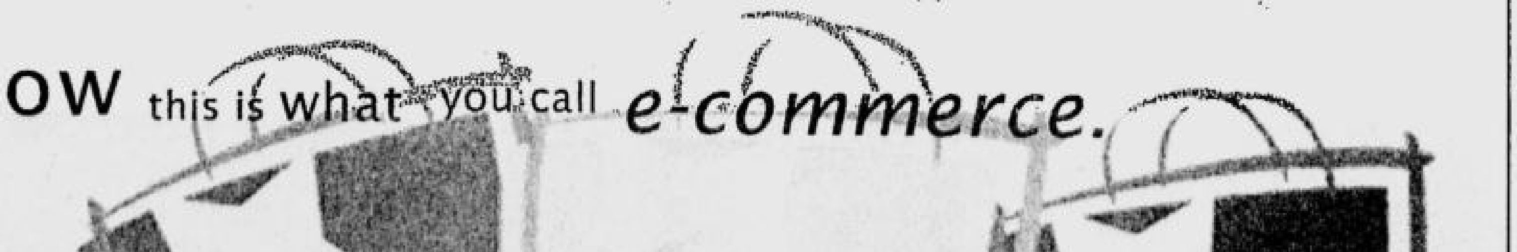
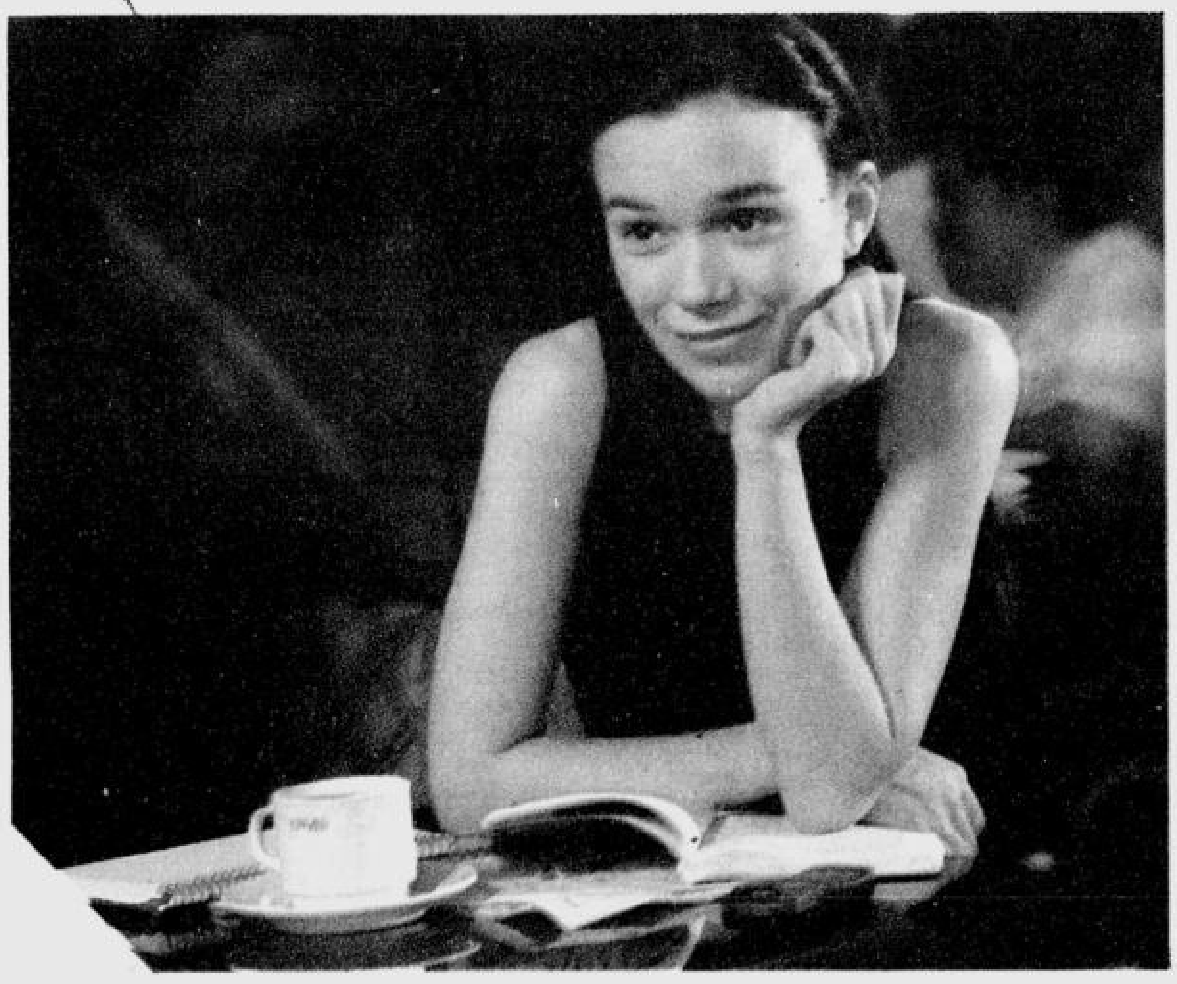


QUIET PLACES AND INTIMATE CONVERSATIONS WITH HER GLOBE HANDYPHONE.

Calling...
Mom

Nicole Schulze,
Communication Arts Student
Commercial Model
GENTXTer
Heavy Caller
IDD User



Twenty-year-old Nicole was rarely seen in parties. "I prefer quiet places for conversations. Cinnzeo is a fave hangout!" she claims. So, when her boyfriend exposed her to the GENTXT level of fun, Nicole adjusted with such ease. With more than 80 partner establishments to hop from, Nicole never runs out of hangouts that suit her style. "I also love watching GENTXT movie premiers even if I have a hard time fitting it in my schedule," she shares.

On weekends, when out-of-town with family or friends, Nicole calls home frequently to check on her terriers, Olga and Joey. With her Globe Handyphone, "I am assured my pets had a good night sleep in my bed and their daily dose of vitamins!" This she shares even as she lazes under the Boracay sun with a crisp copy of the latest paperback.

"I use it more often than my landline. You never know where the people you need to call are!" she quips. Thus, Nicole considers her Globe Handyphone as her line to everything—from the most to the least important of calls. She'd call her mom if she'd be late. She'd call her carpool mates if she can't ride with them. She'd call her boyfriend when she gets home. "And when I get this feeling that my best friends, who are now in the US, miss home, I would give them a call as well," she beams.

Joey
Olga
Calling...
Carlo
GEN TXT
BORACAY

I've got a Globe Handyphone.
I've got all I'll ever need.

Globe
HANDYPHONE
It's all in your hands
Hotline: 730-1000 / www.globe.com.ph

Three points!
Ang galing!

Junior
INQUIRER

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Ball's in their court

Lourdes School of QC's grade school basketball team went from underdogs to champs. This is their story

BY CHRISTINE C. RIVERO

THEY DIDN'T LET GO. When victory was in sight, the members of the Lourdes School of QC grade school basketball team, worked extra hard to bring the trophy home. (From left counter clockwise) Kim Gozun (#6), Justin Paragas, Honor Ortiz, Jason G., Marty Villanueva, Franz Musñgi, Martin Montemayor, Guillen Valero, Mikael Guanlao, Ronald Cordero and Chester Ramos.

VAL HANDUMON

NO ONE expected them to win, surprisingly, not even the team members themselves. Last December, the Lourdes School of Quezon City grade school basketball team suffered their first defeat in the Philippine Athletic Youth Association (Paya) Mini Midgets—or Mini-Paya—basketball eliminations. Back from Christmas break, the team lost still two more games.

"It was a three-game losing skid," says their coach, Jojo Imutan. With a standing of three wins over three losses, the Lourdes team only managed to squeeze into the semi-finals because the scores they got were higher than those of the teams that got eliminated.

In the semis, the boys faced Ateneo, a virtually unbeaten team having lost only once to powerhouse Claret School of Quezon City.

QC showdown and a special "ship story"

Then it was like the boys from Lourdes were jolted awake. At the end of the semis, they had broken their losing streak, winning over Ateneo by a slim four points.

"And that was mostly from free throws," Coach Jojo points out. We almost hear him add, "Whew!"

That victory earned them a chance to play for the championship against Claret, the team with the unblemished record of 7-0. Seven wins and zero losses.

"After we won against Ateneo, Coach Jojo talked to us," says 12-year-old Chester Aaron Ramos, a member of the Lourdes team. "He said it was like our team was on a sinking ship. Then while the ship was going down, we saw a great piece of wood floating in the sea. He told us to cling to that piece of wood so that we wouldn't drown."

Their victory over Ateneo was like that piece of wood, Chester says. "When we played against Claret," he continues, "Coach Jojo said we could already see the shore. He told us never to let go because we could already see what we wanted most of all."

The Lourdes team held together all right, and with their combined efforts they swept like a mighty wave over the well-manned Claret team to clinch the championship.

Everyone helped, even. . .the parents!

"I've been with these kids since I was their P.E. teacher in Grade 2," says Coach Jojo, "I've watched them grow-up so the whole team is really close to one another."

This kind of bonding is the No. 1 factor behind their surprise victory, the Coach adds. "Plus," he says, "the parents also helped out. They would record the games on their video cams and afterwards the boys would watch how they played. They would analyze how to play the game better and what kind of strategies the other teams use."

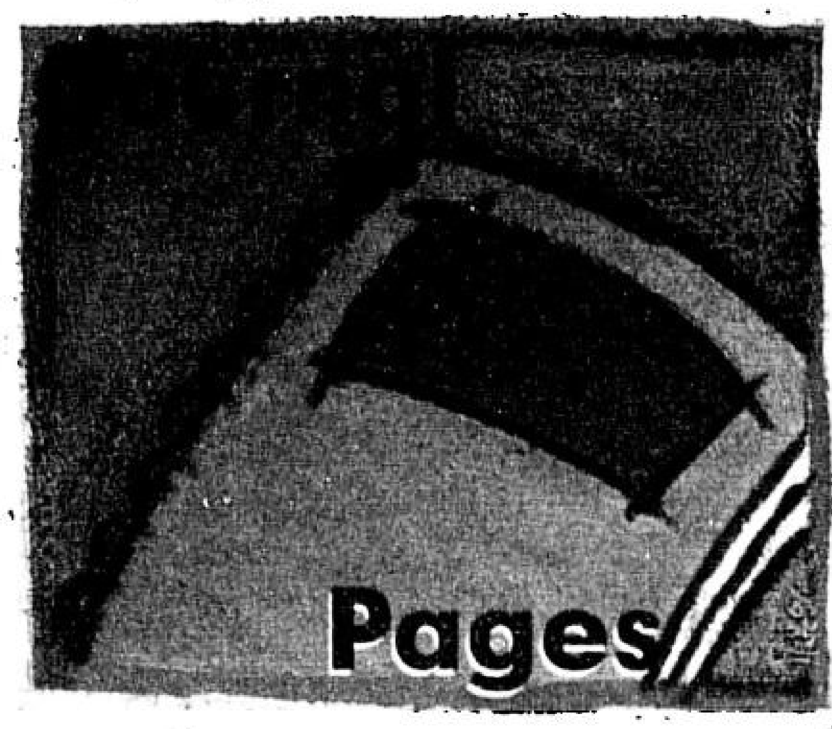
On facing a team as tough as Claret's in the championship, Coach Jojo says, "I told the team that making it to the finals was already a blessing to us. So when we went out there, we already felt there was nothing to lose. There wasn't any pressure at all."

The Lourdes Team Supreme

MEET the amazing batch of LSQC sixth-graders who've earned a place in elementary basketball history

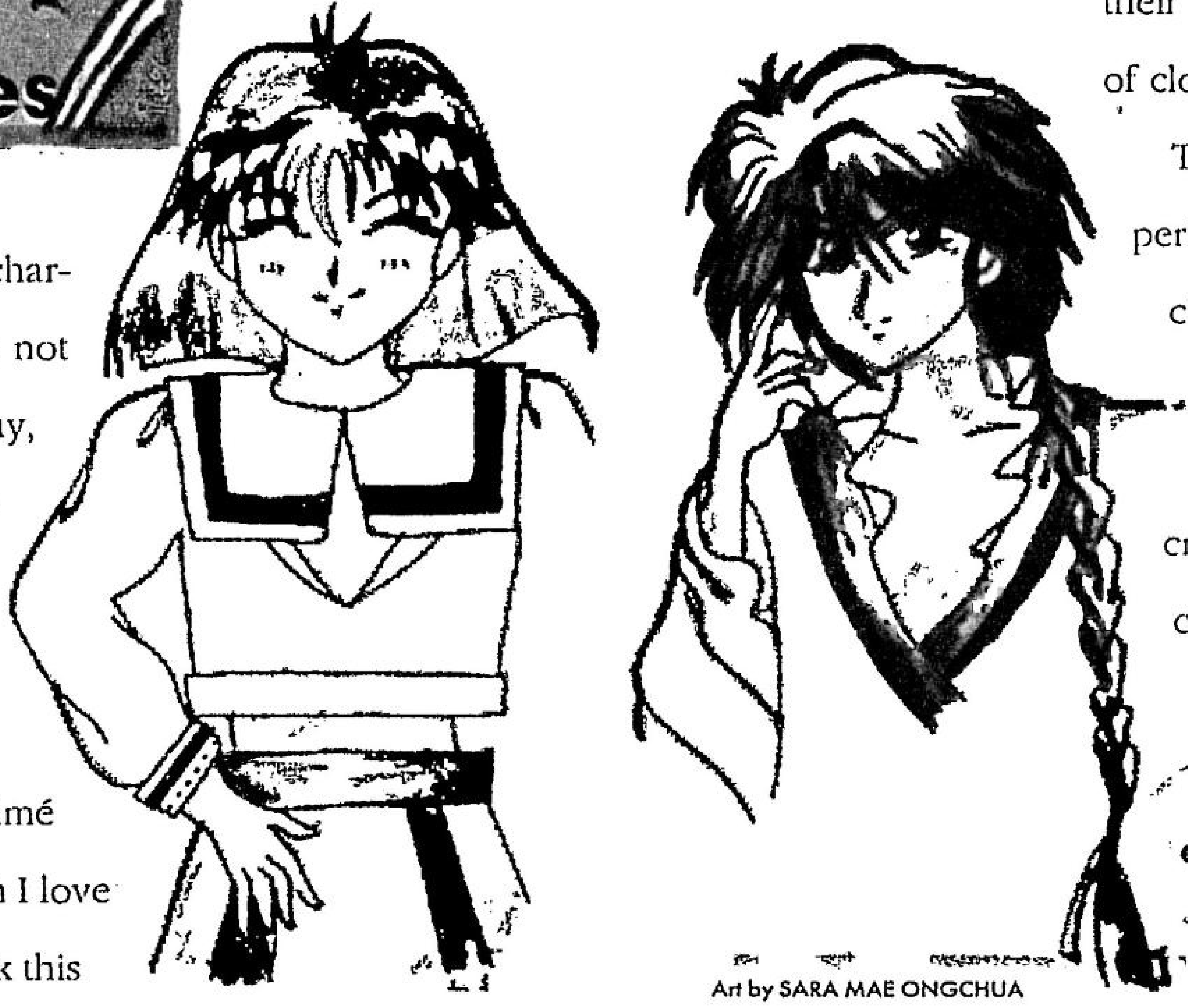
Franz Gerard Musñgi, a.k.a. The Captain. A member of the team since he was in Grade 4, Franz is the team's leader. He rallies the team and helps decide how the game will be played

Ball's/p.4



I like drawing animé

By Sara Mae Ongchua
Tandang Sora, Quezon City


Art by SARA MAE ONGCHUA

I LIKE drawing animé characters. I like drawing them not because they are a fad today, but because it helps me express what I feel. I draw differently when I am happy, angry or sad.

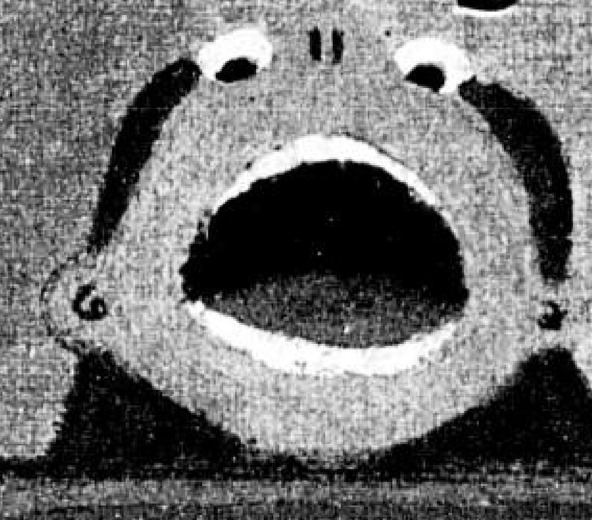
I have been drawing animé since fourth grade. Although I love watching animé, I don't think this means I'm obsessed with it. What I am obsessed with is how to draw these characters differently. And I wish my hand's more flexible. The beauty of the characters' eyes, their different hairstyles and different kinds of clothes makes my artist's heart pound.

They make perfect models for me to experiment with. I can now make my own characters. Drawing them makes my imagination run wild.

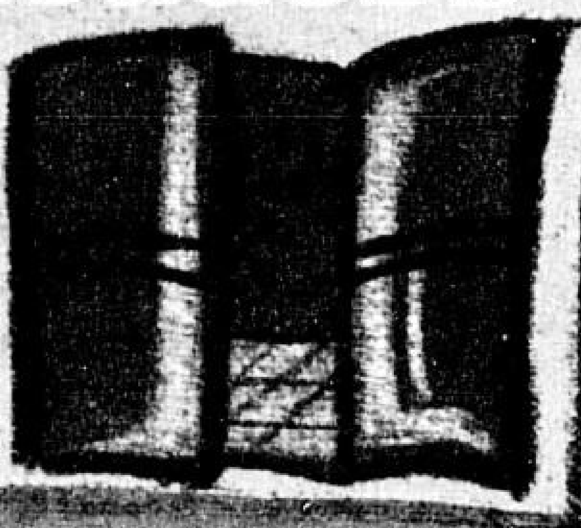
Being able to draw them and creating my own characters is a dream come true.

Sound Familiar?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



Animé cable channel

DEAR Editor,

I'VE read Katrina Emoy's request (JI, Jan. 20, 2001) for you to feature more animé articles. I remember her saying that when she doesn't get to read any articles on animé she gets depressed. Well, I hope she doesn't get depressed anymore. If her family has cable TV, she can watch animé on AXN. This channel has lots of cartoons. Besides, I think animé was created for children's enjoyment—not to make them sad or depressed.—**VINA TRACY SANTOS**, St. Bridget School

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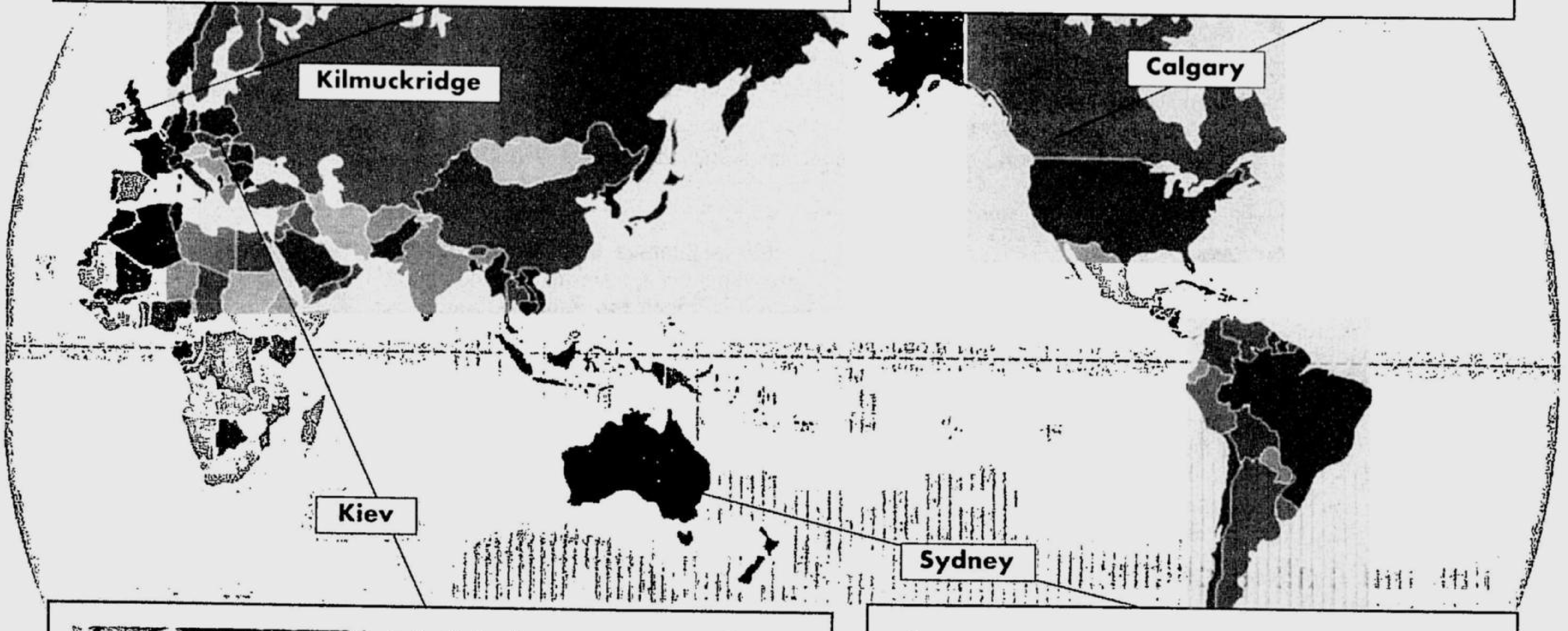
WORLD SCOPE

Sad end

FARMER Mervyn Walsh holds a lamb born one hour previous, on his farm at County Wexford. Irish Department of Agricultural vets will have slaughtered all 1,300 sheep and 100 head of cattle, including the lamb and its mother from Walsh's farm by the end of the day as a precaution against foot and mouth disease. The animals were being slaughtered because of fears that sheep imported from Britain in February and brought to the farm might be carrying foot and mouth disease. *AP*

Top speed skater

GERMANY'S Anni Friesinger grins widely as she holds her trophy up after she won the last 1,500 meters race and overall World Cup at the World Cup speed skating finals in Calgary, Alberta in Canada on Mar. 4. *AP*

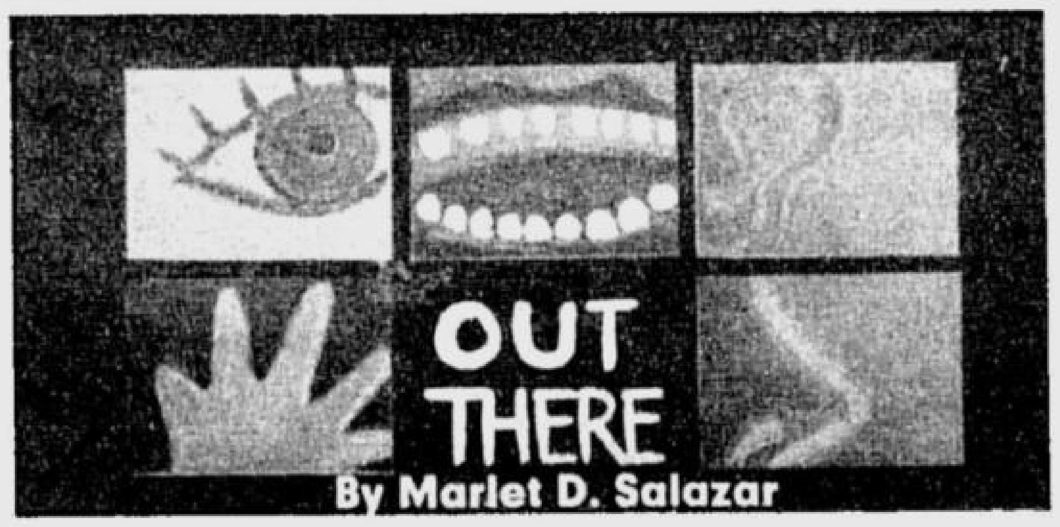


To higher ground

AN ELDERLY woman carries a kid in her arms as she takes her goats into safety in a flood-affected village by the River Tisza some 600 kilometers southwest of Kiev, Ukraine. Units of the Ukrainian Ministry of Emergency have been on high alert due to the floods in the western part of the country. On Mar. 5 the River Tisza broke through the dikes on three points, but the floods did not immediately threaten populated areas so far. *AP*

Is he spaced out?

SPACE jumper Rodd Millner, shown here with his jumping gear, has announced that he plans to make a jump off the edge of outer space and plummet 40 kilometers to Earth in the highest skydive ever attempted. Millner, a former army commando, wants to make the jump in March 2002. *AP*



By Marlet D. Salazar

Got something for Out There?

Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Contests

BE A MUSEUM CONSULTANT. You read it right! Museo Pambata is looking for 12 kids ages 8-12 to join the team that will cook up new ideas for some of its theme rooms. Interested? Come to Museo Pambata on March 24, 10 a.m. for the first screening session. For the lucky applicants, a final interview is slated on March 31. Chosen junior museum consultants will receive an "I am a BrainChild" shirt, a free membership in the Museo Pambata Club plus other exciting privileges. For more important details call up 523-1797 to 98. Museo is located at Roxas Boulevard, corner South Drive, Manila.

ULTIMATE FIELD TRIP. Watch the initial screening of "Rugrats in Paris, then write to Nickelodeon and tell them what would be the ultimate class trip (would it be to go wild in Paris with the Rugrats?) Include a photo of yourself and your classmates or friends when you send your entries. You can mail it to Nickelodeon's Rugrats in Paris Contest, P.O. Box 12500, Ortigas Center Post Office, Pasig City. Hurry the deadline is on March 24.

Workshops

STORYTELLING AND ALL! Fun and excitement await kids this summer as children books' publisher Adarna House, stages "Kwentong Adarna: Summer Storytelling and Workshops for Kids." Listen to wonderful stories in the storytelling sessions, there will also be workshops and activities on Philippine art, culture and history. For inquiries call up 410-5200 and look for Odette or Ghie or send an e-mail to admin@adarna.com.ph

SUMMER PROGRAMS. Join the activities prepared by Dyna Minds Center for preschool and grade school kids. There are classes on speech improvement; reading readiness, beginning reading and developmental reading, grammar enhancement, arts and crafts. A free orientation lesson is scheduled on April 7 at 9 a.m. at 23 Lilac St., Rim View Park, Marikina City. For inquiries, call up 942-3952.

BUSY SUMMER. Summer vacation's just around the corner, here are some cool things to keep you busy. Join the Sacred Heart School's line-up of activities for artists and sports buff. Join the art workshop and develop your talent in painting. Then, there's the Magic Workshop where you can learn some tricks you can strut your wares to family and friends. And for those kids ages 5-12 who wants to learn Taekwondo, join in and learn not just the basics but also about self-control, discipline, confidence and respect for others. For info call the nearest Sacred Heart School branch: San Lorenzo, Makati—810-8506, 894-2273, 815-3058; Malabon—363-3154; CAC-Shangri-La Plaza Mall—636-1227, 631-9759; CAC-Forbes—840-5493, 840-2632; CAC-Dela Rosa—810-8997, 810-8890; Sun Valley—823-1348, 776-0312; Goodwill Bookstore, Glorietta—810-5922; 813-4956 to 57.

WORKSHOPS AT MUSEO. Check out the workshops at Escuela sa Museo. There will be sessions in creative writing, oral communication, drawing, mixed media, oil painting, pastel, sculpture, and watercolor. Classes will be held weekdays or Saturdays at the Ayala Museum. For details call Ms Ethel Villafranca at 812-1191 to 97 local 130 or send an email to edvillafranca@ayalamuseum.com. Or you can also drop by the Ayala Museum, Makati Avenue, Makati City, from Tuesday to Saturday at 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Photos by VAL HANDUMON

ACE. Kim shows 'em how it's done.

Ball's... (from page 1)

on-court. Win or lose, he always puts up a good fight. And when hecklers in the crowd tease him (sometimes because he shaved his hair, sometimes because of his height), he keeps only the game in sight. Says Franz, "I only focus on the game."

Guillen Valero. Hawkeyes. He can see the basket from a mile away. When it comes to impossible three-point shots, the Lourdes team can rely on Guillen to deliver. "I grew up playing basketball and my brothers played for Lourdes too," he says. At 13, Guillen is the team's eldest member. He's also one of the very best.

Kim Patrick Gozun. Acrobat Ace. A new member, Kim only joined the team this school year but already he's proven to be invaluable. A quiet guy, Kim is most lethal when he's tunneling through enemy territory, somehow managing to steal the ball in fast-paced acrobatic twists and turns. He plays basketball with his dad and hopes very much to become a professional basketball player when he grows up.

Mikael Guanlao. Steel Striker. This guy also shoots well from the outside and at lightning speed too. Mikael, though, is better known for his trademark steel grip on the ball. As soon as he manages to grab it, he bends forward and wraps his arms around the ball tighter than a steel coil. "I saw the players do that on TV," Mikael says with a shrug. He's observant and he's got a healthy I-just-enjoy-the-game attitude too.

Martin Jose Montemayor. Rock Dude. When Martin is ploughing toward the basket, no one can stop him. One of the heftier members of the team, he plays both good defense and offense. Every now and then, he can get a three-pointer in the basket too.

Irwin "Guwapo" Leonardo. Whizzer. He's got the fastest hands on the team. His sole responsibility, even if he doesn't score, is to keep the ball clear out of the opponents' hands. He also says he's the most good-looking guy on the team.

The other members of LSQC's Basketball Team Supreme are: **Felix Martin Villanueva, Chester Aaron Ramos, Jason Go, Ronald Daniel Cordero, Honor Dominic Ortiz, Justin Paragas and Kennex de Dios.**

ROCK. Martin goes for a slammer.

Everyday Fresh
With Sweet Ube Filling
Gardenia
Ube Bun
Net wt. 60 g

BIG UBE TASTE! BIG UBE FUN!

New!

Gardenia

Ube Fun Bun

Now, there's a new fun bun flavor to delight your taste buds. Gardenia Ube Fun Bun. Filled with the goodness of real ube. Each bun baked and packed fresh from the oven. So yummy! So goody! So funFILLING! Only from Gardenia!

Gardenia
Fun Buns
THE GOODY FUN WAY!

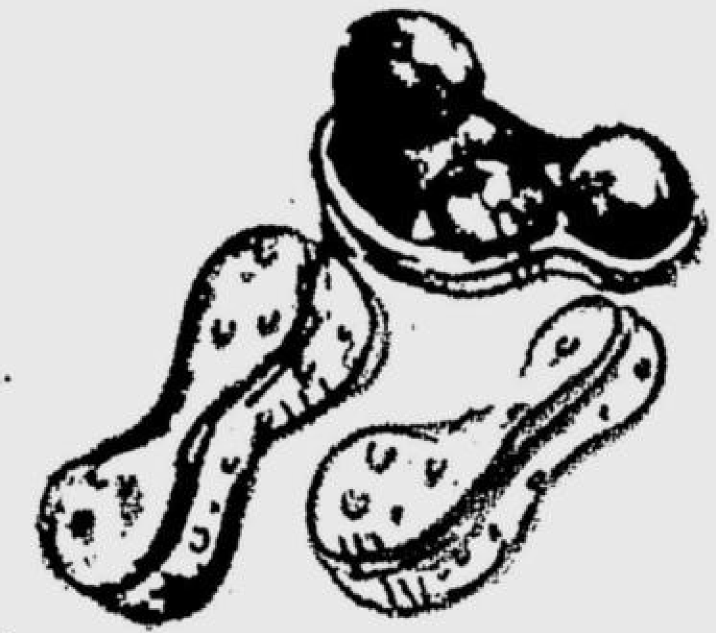
TRY THIS, TOO!
Chocolate Fun Bun

Available at supermark[illegible]enience stores

FOR or By KIDS

Apat na Tulang Kutkutin

NI PAULINA FLORES-BAUTISTA
GUHIT NI STEPH BRAVO



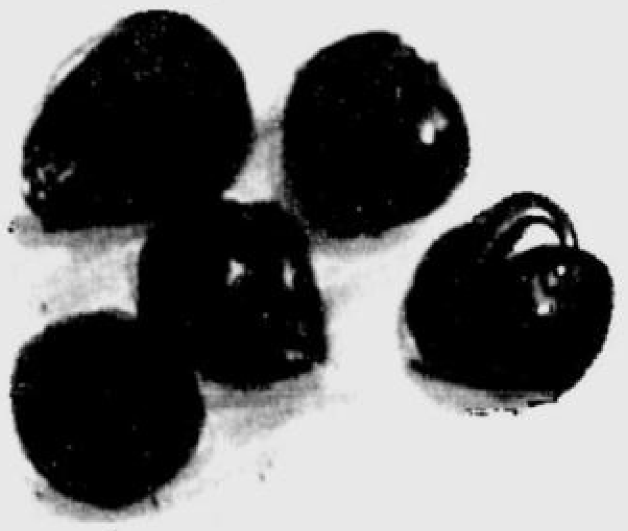
Mani

Mani, Mani, Mani
Pagkaing utak ng lahi.

Nilagang Mani na may talukap,
Balat di ikinakalat.

Burlesk na Mani, napakasarap
Daling kainin dahil walang balat.

Mani na may bawang at asin
Ay Pinoy na Pinoy ang dating.

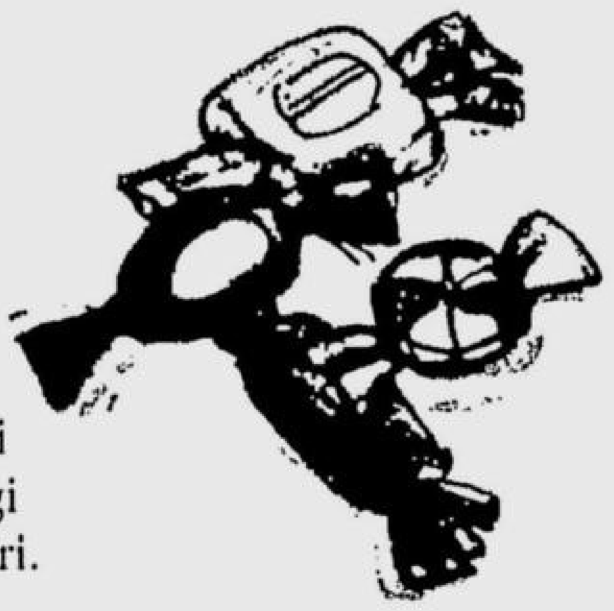


Butong Pakwan

Itim na butong pakwan
Oras ay malilimutan.
Kung ito'y binubuksan.

Itim na butong pakwan
sa ngipin binabalatan
upang makuha ang laman.

Isa-isang kinukutkot
Kahit mga labi'y mamutok
Upang laman ay madukot.

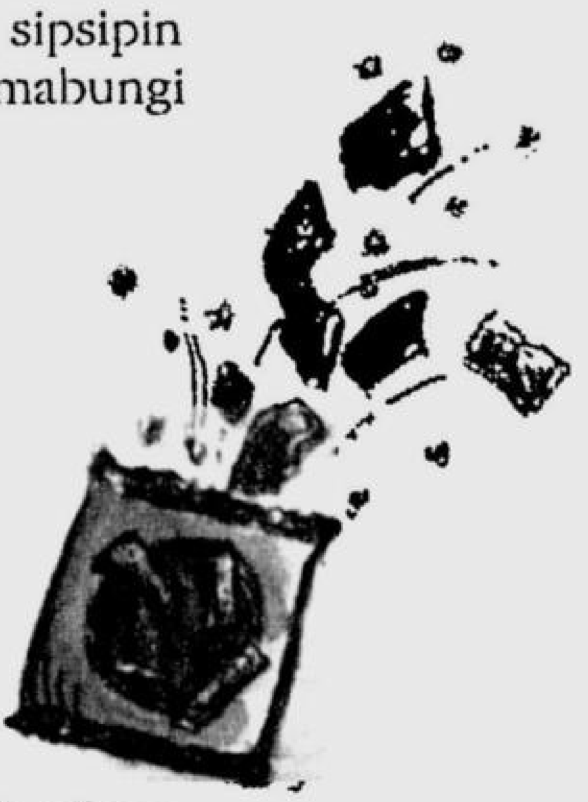


Kendi

Kendi, Kendi, Kendi
Bata'y di makatanggi
Sa tamis na dulot niri.

Kendi'y binabalatan
Isinusubo ng batang nasasabikan.
Sa tamis na nasasarapan.

Sana'y pakaisipin
Na isang kendi lang ang sipsipin
Sa isang araw upang di mabungi
ang ngipin.



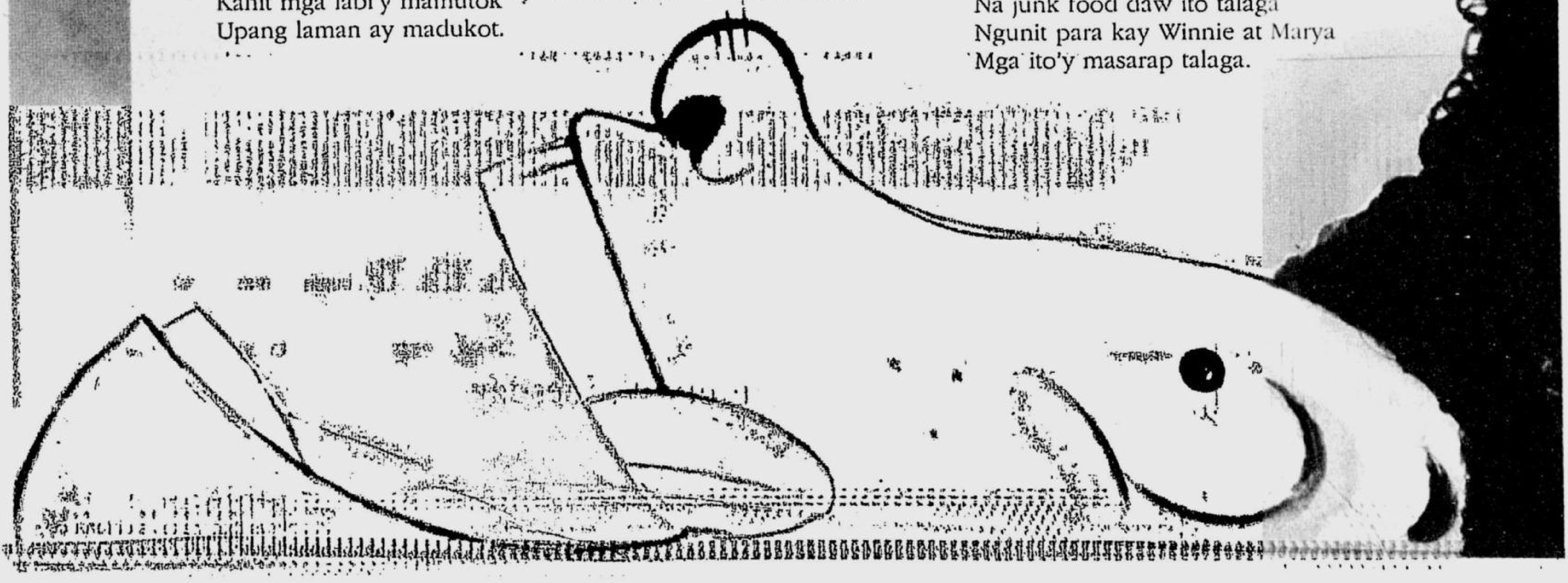
Sitsirya

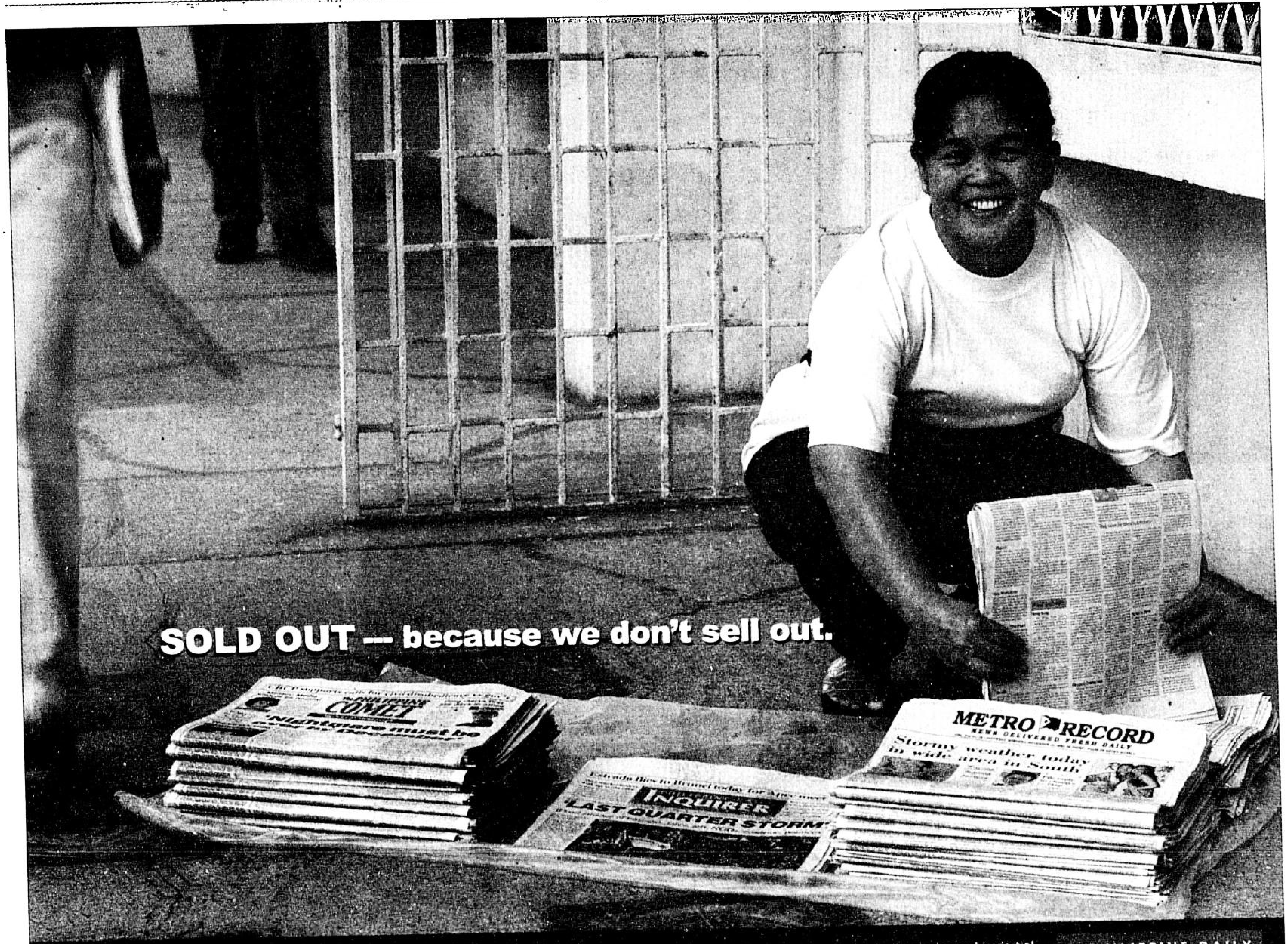
Takaw-tingin si Marya
Sa rami ng sitsirya
Sa magulong Divisoria.

Mukhang masarap ang Tortilyas
Na maaaring ikuwintas
Sa leeg bilang hiyas.

Mga Chippy at Tiniwini
Na binabaon diyan at dini
Ng kaibigang Winnie.

Sitsirya, sabi nila
Di raw dapat ipagkaiba
Na junk food daw ito talaga
Ngunit para kay Winnie at Marya
Mga ito'y masarap talaga.




SOLD OUT — because we don't sell out.
COMET
METRO RECORD
Stormy weather today in wide area in South
INQUIRER
LAST QUARTER STORM

Ever wonder why the INQUIRER is the fastest-selling newspaper nationwide?* Probably because readers know they can count on us for exclusive stories and impartial coverage that tell it like it is. Which may be why the INQUIRER also came out No. 1 in credibility and readership numbers (total and across *all* age groups and sectors) nationwide, according to the Asia Research Organization survey (Sept. 30, 2000) and Pulse Asia (Dec. 1999). **To all our advertisers, supporters and loyal readers, thank you for helping us prove every day that independence is smart business.**

*According to the Newspaper, Magazine & Comics Dealers Association of the Philippines, Sept. 2000.

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Read
PEOPLE at WORK
every Wednesday

A publication of
INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

The Blue Hat and Monica

Here's a 10-year-old who has published her very own book!

By Christine C. Rivero

THE BLUE HAT

ONCE UPON A MONICA. Her whole family helped Monica make her book-dream come true. ROMY HOMILLADA

"MAMA, Mama, I want a book," a little voice said.

"Okay, I'll buy you one" replied a voice that sounded Mama-like.

Kids 'r'rrific

"No," insisted the little voice, and you could almost imagine a little person shaking her head. "I want to make MY book."

"Ohhh," said the Mama, finally understanding, "I think my officemate can help you."

Ten-year-old Monica Nicole Camins Diomampo and her mom had a conversation just like that around two years ago. That was when Monica decided to publish all the stories she wrote in her very own book.

A book by a kid, for other kids (hmmm, dat sounds familiar!)

"I wanted to inspire other children to be good and to prove that not only grown-ups can write stories," says Monica

Her book, entitled "The Blue Hat and Other Stories," contains six stories, including one she wrote when she was only 7 years old.

"All my stories have moral lessons," she tells us. In "The Broken Mirror," for example, a little boy named Tom learns to tell the truth while "The Rich Man and the Brave Dog" teaches readers to be kinder to their pets.

Mean kids are told not to misbehave and giant fruits and vegetables show up to make sure everyone eats better in the other stories. Now, according to Monica, the story of "The Blue Hat" actually happened to her. "I was a prep student and I lost my hat. But in the story, I made a positive ending," she says, "another student returned the hat to the girl."

When her book was being made, Monica inspected all the illustrations and checked the pages for errors. Around 1,500 copies of her book were made.

"Some of them I gave away, some of them I sell," she says, "then I save the money so I can help my family in our needs."

Someday she'll be Sis. Monica?

Monica is planning to publish another book maybe later this year. Right now, she says, "I'm writing a story about a princess who wants to show-off."

This young writer also likes to read books as much as make them. In fact, she can finish as many as two Nancy Drew or Babysitter's Club novels in one day.

She's no shy bookworm, though. An honor student at Ville St. John Academy in Parañaque, Monica stays behind for a little more than an hour after class to tutor her classmates. "My classmates ask me to help them," she says, grinning, "at dismissal time, I make them read their books and then I give them a short quiz." Often, they ask her to help them figure out their tough science lessons.

Ask her what she wants to be when she grows up, though, and Monica will answer, "To be a nun."

"Nuns are very good and they serve God. I want to serve God too," she explains.

We think she's doing that already. After all, Monica wrote in the beginning of her book, "I dedicate this book to God for giving me the talent to write stories for children."

A Message for Sister Perla

MONICA asked us to print this special message for her favorite teacher, Sister Perla.

Sister Perla is one of the many people who inspires Monica to write more stories. She says, "Remember wherever you go, you will be kept in my heart my whole life."

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're `Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to;

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor.
Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a free **Junior Inquirer T-shirt!**

Kid 'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate: ____________________

Age: ______

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because:
(Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

She/he lives at

and studies at

Her/his contact number is:

Sender's Name:

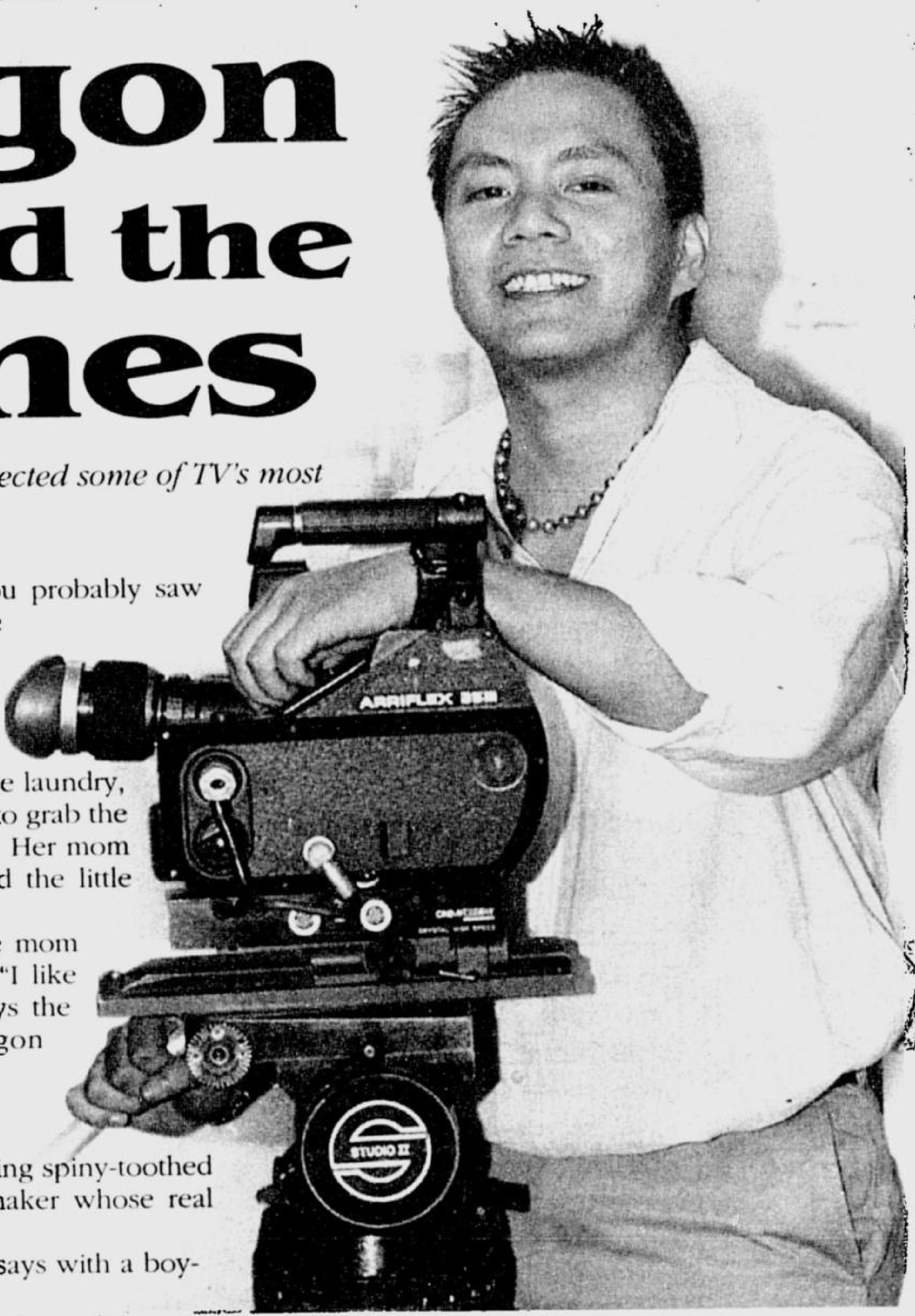
Sender's Age & School: ______, ____________

Sender's Address:

Sender's Contact No.

Dragon behind the Scenes

Filmmaker Dragon Pineda directed some of TV's most memorable ads



COMING SOON. Watch out for Dragon's very own movie!

Photos by ROGER MARGALLO

WATCHING TV last year, you probably saw the Tide commercial where a little girl spills a gob of ink on her dress. Knowing her mom would get mighty upset about the stain, she decides to wash the dress by herself. But her mom, who's doing the laundry, has the detergent bar. Attempting to grab the soap, she sneaks up on her mom. Her mom catches her, though (oopsy!), and the little girl is forced to tell the truth.

Happily, the ad ends with the mom helping the girl wash her dress. "I like doing commercials like that," says the ad's director, 29-year-old Dragon Pineda, "the ones with heart."

The making of "Direk" Dragon

Just so you know, there's nothing spiny-toothed or scaly-backed about this filmmaker whose real name is Aries.

"Dragon is my nickname," he says with a boyish grin.

After graduating from the UP College of Fine Arts, he submitted five paintings to an ad agency. When the paintings were put together, they formed the figure of a dragon.

"The agency forgot my name when they decided to hire me," he explains, "they said, 'Let's hire this dragon guy.' The name stuck."

A painter even while he was a student at the Philippine High School for the' Arts, Dragon soon found himself becoming interested in "moving pictures" or films. The first short film he made when he was only 19 won the first prize in a contest organized by the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Now he's working on another short film and even a script for a full-length movie.

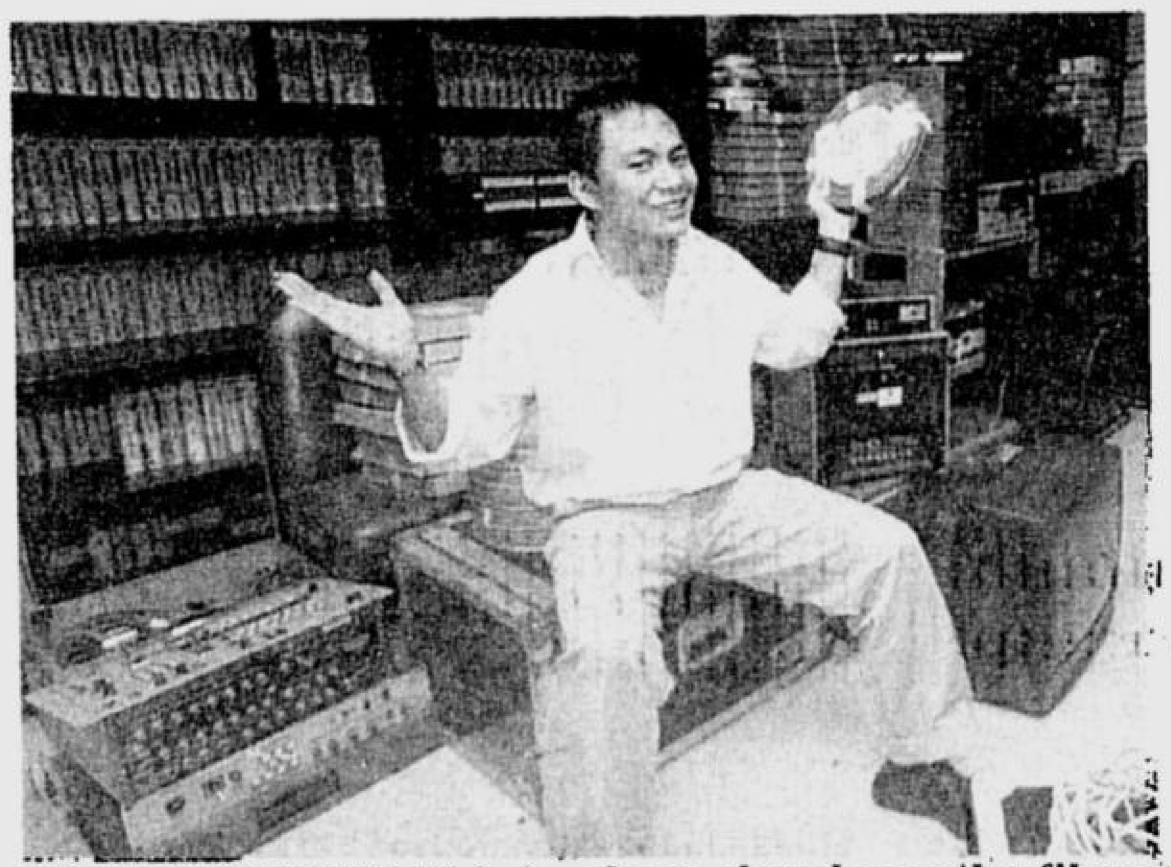
Doray and her feather duster

At the same time too, Dragon directs all these fun commercials. Remember the first PLDT caller ID ad? That's where Doray declares, *"Aru, dugo-dugo* gang *kayo!"* while shaking her feather duster menacingly at the phone. He's also done ads for Greenwich Pizza, Enfagrow, Secret Deodorant and recently, BPI's cash-you-can-flash cards.

"It sounds like a simple answer but a director's job is really to give direction," says Dragon. That means he makes all the big decisions on how the ad will look, from how the actors should act to the lighting, to how long it will be.

Now the cool thing is, Dragon didn't learn how to do all that in school. "I learned a lot by watching other people work," he says. Smiling he adds, "Being a good audience is a good background for a filmmaker."

—*Christine C. Rivero*



EXCUSE 'D MESS. This is where they keep the films.

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

A.K.A. COOL
is an 'adult known as cool'
They're the folks
in our own family
Or the people
we meet in school.

I nominate ________________.

He/She is ____ years old and is my ________________.

Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:

1) ________________;

2) ________________;

3) ________________;

4) ________________;

and

5) ________________.

My nominee lives at ________________

____

Give him/her a call at ________________ or send him/her an e-mail at ________________.

By the way, I'm ________________

________________.

I'm ____ years old.

My address is

____

You may call me at

____

¿ThinkathoN?

By Bong Barrameda

Island-Hopping

BASKING below are some of the world's most famous islands. Do you know to which country each belongs?

____1. **Bali**
____2. **Tahiti**
____3. **Oahu**
____4. **Tasmania**
____5. **Ibiza**
____6. **Hokkaido**
____7. **Crete**
____8. **Virgin Islands**
____9. **Easter Island**
____10. **Galapagos**
____11. **Greenland**
____12. **Sentosa**
____13. **Victoria Island**
____14. **Phuket**
____15. **Boracay**

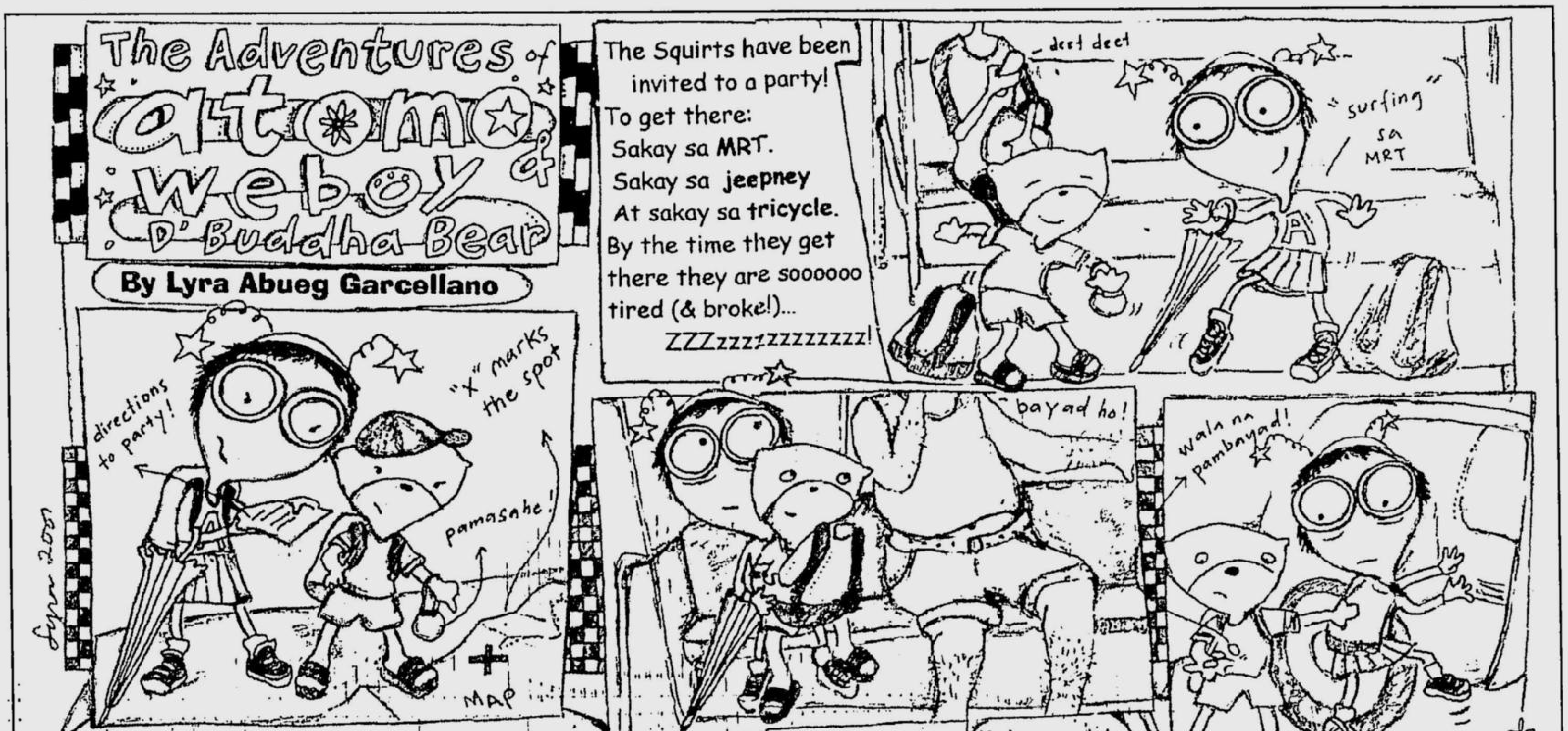
A. **United States**
B. **Britain**
C. **Singapore**
D. **Canada**
E. **Spain**
F. **France**
G. **Philippines**
H. **Greece**
I. **Indonesia**
J. **Thailand**
K. **Denmark**
L. **Australia**
M. **Ecuador**
N. **Chile**
O. **Spain**

Answers :

1. I 6. O 11. K
2. F 7. H 12. C
3. A 8. B 13. D
4. L 9. N 14. J
5. E 10. M 15. G

Ratings :

superbrain!
18 - 20
excellent!
14 - 17
good!
8 - 13


The Adventures of atomo & weboy D' Buddha Bear
deet deet
"surfing" sa MRT
directions to party!
"x" marks the spot
pamasahe!
MAP
Lyra 2001
bayad ho!
wala na pambayad!

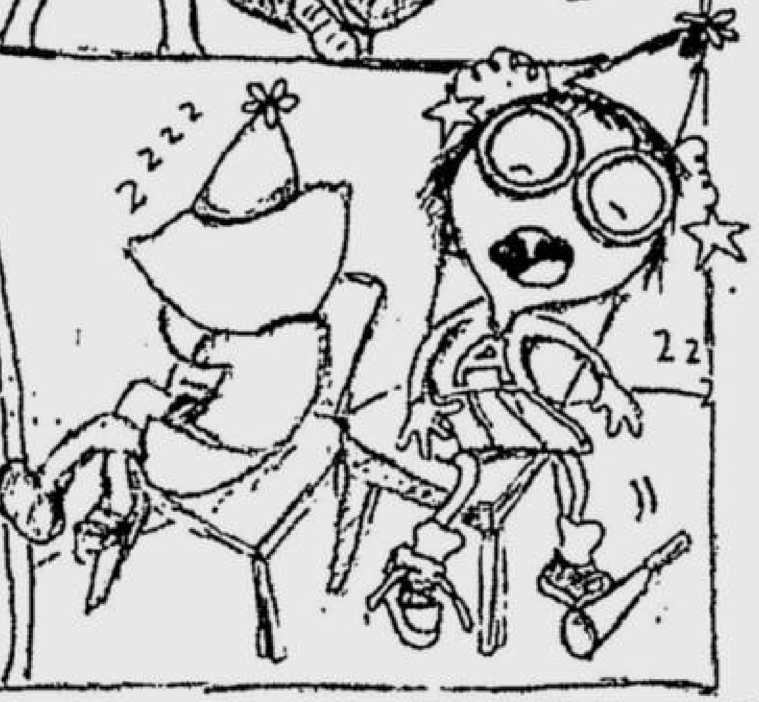
By Lyra Abueg Garcellano

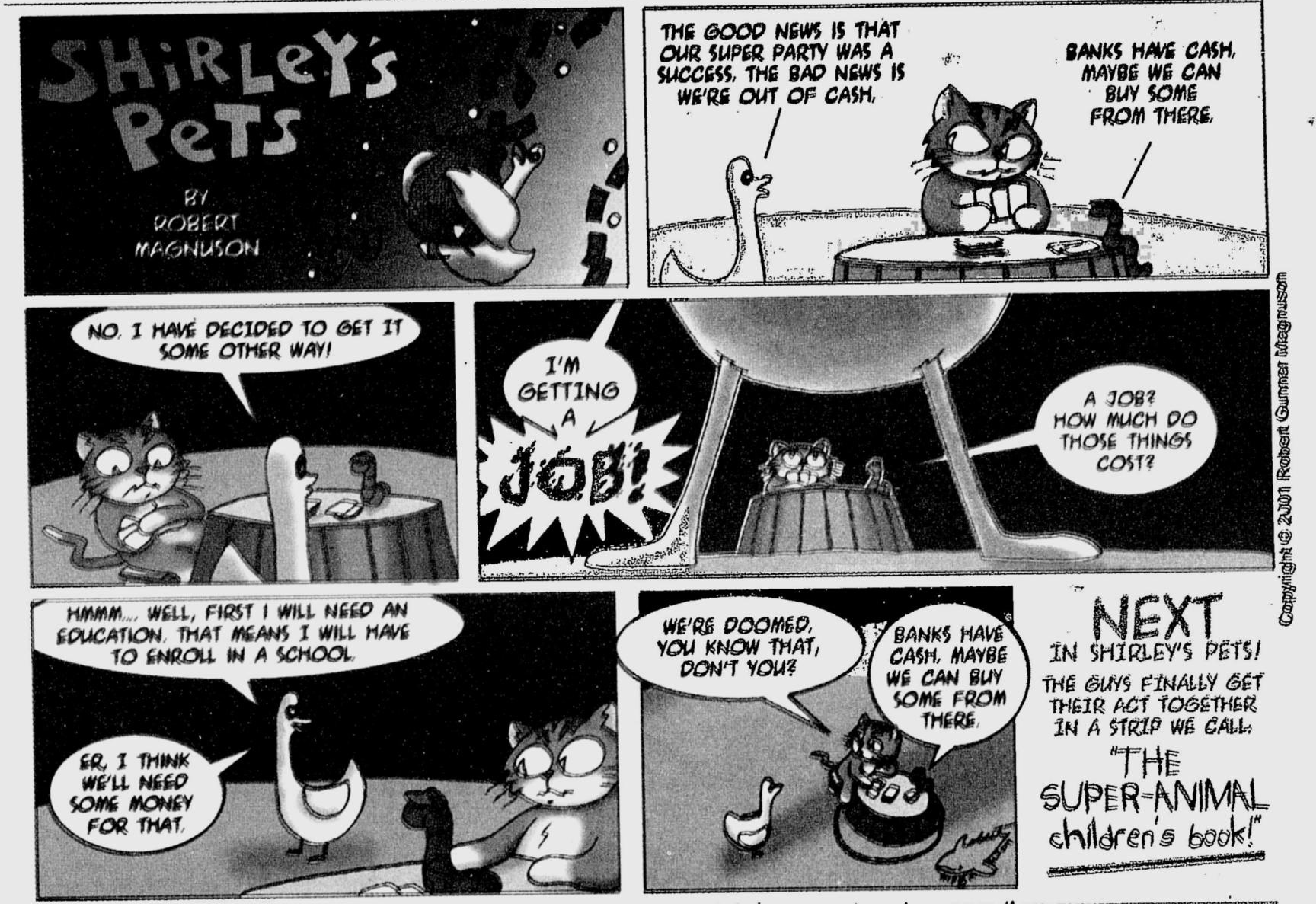
The Squirts have been invited to a party!
To get there:
Sakay sa **MRT**.
Sakay sa **jeepney**
At sakay sa **tricycle**.
By the time they get there they are soooooo tired (& broke!)...
ZZZzzzzzzzzzzzz!

B P A T E R O S R M V W X Y C M P A R A Ñ A Q U E
V A L E N Z U E L A T U G Z N A V O T A S B C D E
C S E F I J K L M L S D I N L R L L M P A S I G F
M A N I L A N S T A R M U A B I G O N O N D H I J
D Y G H W Z V D U B Ñ O G C D K H P O S J Ñ L G K
Ñ O X P Y B C E F O P Q A E F I I Q R C U A M N O
A G H I Q U E Z O N C I T Y J N T V X M A K A T I
L K J M A N D A L U Y O N G K A U W Y Z N N P Q R

Encircle these areas found in the Metro Manila Street Map!

Valenzuela
Malabon
Navotas
Caloocan
Manila
Quezon City
Parañaque
Marikina
Mandaluyong
Makati
Pasig
Pateros
San Juan
Pasay
Taguig

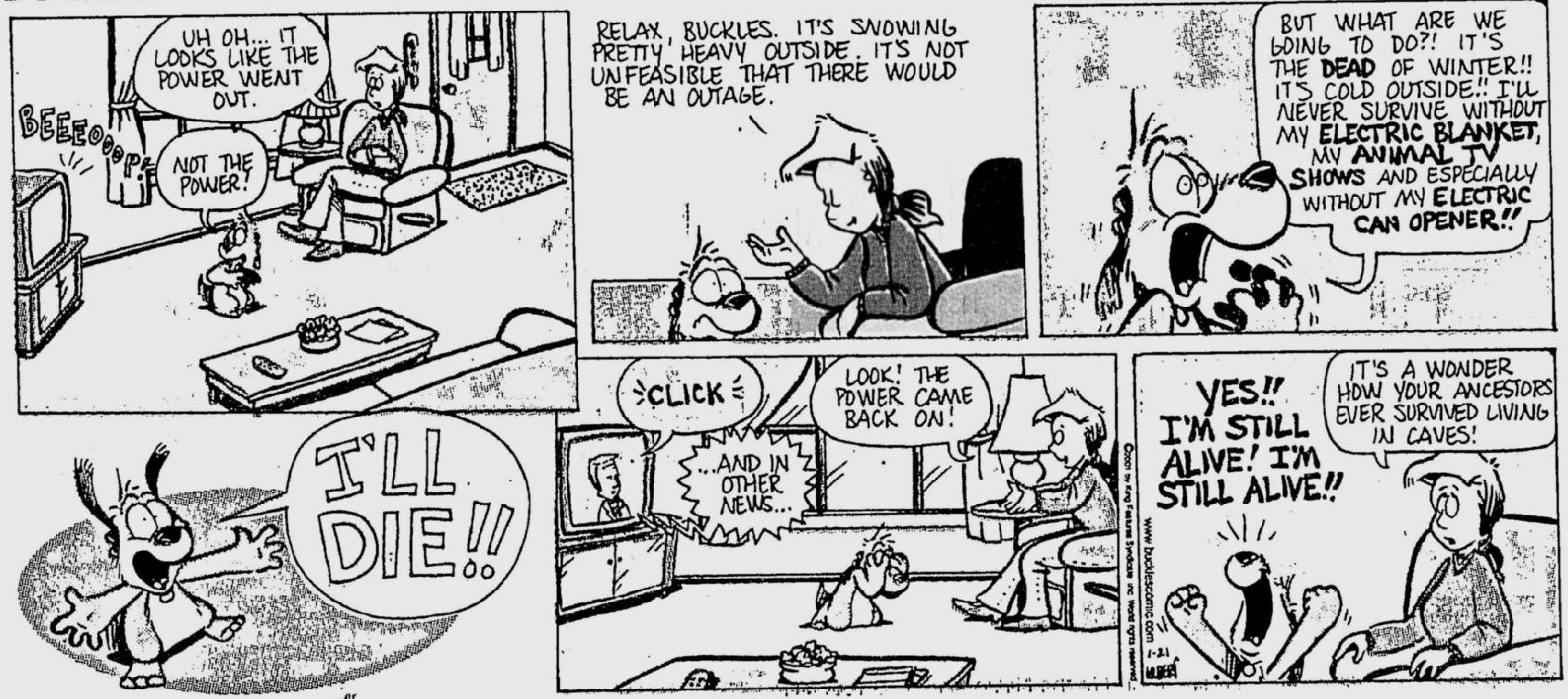


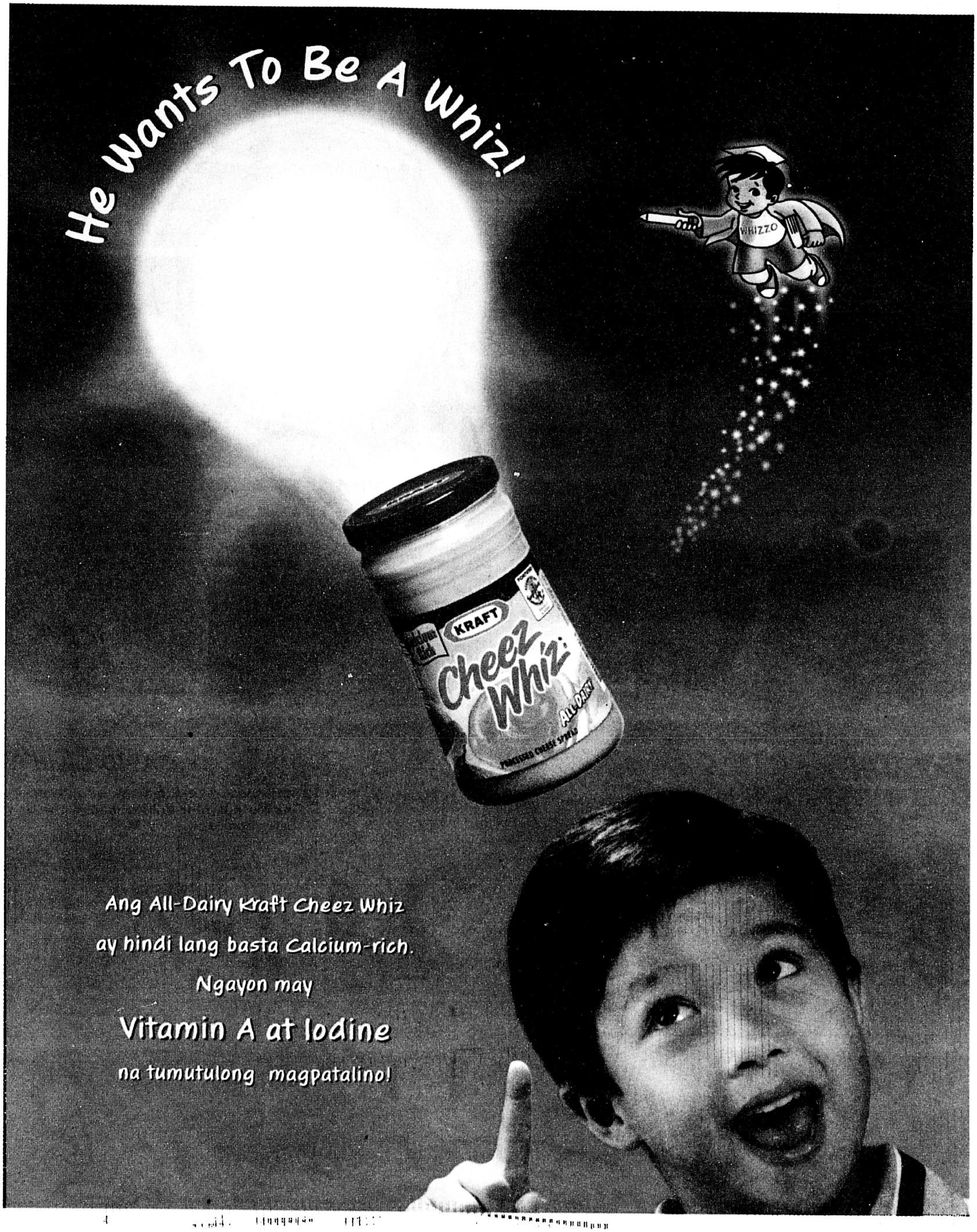

SHIRLEY'S PETS
BY ROBERT MAGNUSON
THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT OUR SUPER PARTY WAS A SUCCESS. THE BAD NEWS IS WE'RE OUT OF CASH.
BANKS HAVE CASH. MAYBE WE CAN BUY SOME FROM THERE.
NO. I HAVE DECIDED TO GET IT SOME OTHER WAY!
I'M GETTING A JOB!
A JOB? HOW MUCH DO THOSE THINGS COST?
HMMM... WELL, FIRST I WILL NEED AN EDUCATION. THAT MEANS I WILL HAVE TO ENROLL IN A SCHOOL.
ER, I THINK WE'LL NEED SOME MONEY FOR THAT.
WE'RE DOOMED, YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
BANKS HAVE CASH. MAYBE WE CAN BUY SOME FROM THERE.
NEXT IN SHIRLEY'S PETS! THE GUYS FINALLY GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER IN A STRIP WE CALL: "THE SUPER-ANIMAL children's book!"
Copyright © 2001 Robert Gunnar Magnuson

visit shirley and her pets at www.shirleyspets.cheesedip.com

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


UH OH... IT LOOKS LIKE THE POWER WENT OUT.
BEEEOOOP!
NOT THE POWER!
RELAX, BUCKLES. IT'S SNOWING PRETTY HEAVY OUTSIDE. IT'S NOT UNFEASIBLE THAT THERE WOULD BE AN OUTAGE.
BUT WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?! IT'S THE DEAD OF WINTER!! IT'S COLD OUTSIDE!! I'LL NEVER SURVIVE WITHOUT MY ELECTRIC BLANKET, MY ANIMAL TV SHOWS AND ESPECIALLY WITHOUT MY ELECTRIC CAN OPENER!!
I'LL DIE!!
CLICK
...AND IN OTHER NEWS...
LOOK! THE POWER CAME BACK ON!
©2001 by King Features Syndicate Inc. World rights reserved.
www.bucklescomic.com
1-21 GILBERT
YES!! I'M STILL ALIVE! I'M STILL ALIVE!!
IT'S A WONDER HOW YOUR ANCESTORS EVER SURVIVED LIVING IN CAVES!


He Wants To Be A Whiz!
WHIZZO
KRAFT
Cheez Whiz
ALL-DAIRY
PROCESSED CHEESE SPREAD

Ang All-Dairy Kraft Cheez Whiz
ay hindi lang basta Calcium-rich.
Ngayon may
Vitamin A at Iodine
na tumutulong magpatalino!